

THE MESSAGE OF STEWARDSHIP

RALPH S. CUSHMAN



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The message of stewardship

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

ADVENTURES IN STEWARDSHIP

THE MESSAGE OF STEWARDSHIP

A BOOK FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS
AND CLASS STUDY

By
RALPH S. CUSHMAN



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TO
THOSE CHRISTIAN BUSINESS MEN
OF AMERICA
WHO HAVE STOOD, AND ARE STANDING,
WITH ALL THEIR RESOURCES
OF PERSONALITY AND POSSESSIONS,
IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE BATTLE FOR THE
CHRISTIAN CONQUEST OF
THE WORLD

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE.....	9
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	11
I. JESUS' PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.....	15
II. GOD'S STEWARDSHIP.....	34
III. JESUS TEACHING STEWARDSHIP.....	52
IV. STEWARDSHIP AND SERVICE.....	73
V. PENTECOST AND STEWARDSHIP.....	93
VI. STEWARDSHIP AND PRAYER.....	111
VII. THE PERIL TO STEWARDSHIP.....	131
VIII. STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY.....	151
IX. BUSINESS AND STEWARDSHIP.....	174
X. STEWARDSHIP AND THE TITHE.....	197
INDEX.....	222
SCRIPTURE QUOTED.....	236
POEMS QUOTED.....	238

PREFACE

THIS book has been written out of a deep desire to indicate more clearly the inestimable spiritual value of the stewardship message, by showing that the principle of stewardship underlies the entire message of the Old and New Testaments.

An outline of the argument as given in the following pages would point out ten definite propositions concerning stewardship: (1) that it is Jesus' philosophy of life; (2) that it is the very essence of the character of God; (3) that it is the special theme of the teachings of Jesus; (4) that "stewardship," rather than "service," is God's key word; (5) that Pentecost deepened the stewardship conviction in the minds of the disciples; (6) that the Pentecostal church laid special emphasis upon the stewardship of prayer; (7) that the ancient enemy of stewardship is covetousness; (8) that the Pentecostal stewardship consciousness was simultaneous with consecration of property to the will of God; (9) that the need of the world then, as to-day, is the application of the principle of stewardship to all life, including property and business; (10) and finally that God's approach to stewardship of material resources has always been through the dedication of a holy portion, or the tithe.

The book is proposed both for use in daily devotions and for classes in the study of stewardship. To the latter end the introductory section of each chapter will serve as the basis of study, while the daily readings will assure additional help. Material for helps for class and individual study will be found at the close of each chapter.

Special emphasis has been laid on the stewardship of business, because the practice of the principle of stewardship is the great need of the employer and the employee, if the industrial problems are to be solved.

R. S. C.

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QUESTIONS

1. Why was this book written?
2. Outline the subjects to be discussed. (See Contents.)
3. How is the book to be used?
4. In this study, where should the emphasis be placed? (See *The New Christian*, Study Two, pp. 23ff. and p. 140.)

EXERCISES

1. Briefly record your own thought on the need for such a book, and on the topics proposed for discussion. This will add to your profit in the further study.
2. Make a statement of your purpose in this study.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Prepare for this study:
 - (1) Own the book.
 - (2) Secure free pamphlets from Stewardship Headquarters of your church.
 - (3) Have a notebook, keep notes.
 - (4) Study with others if possible.
2. Make this a course in spiritual, intellectual, social, and financial efficiency.

CHAPTER I

Jesus' Philosophy of Life

INTRODUCTORY

I

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL is responsible for the assertion that "there is dynamite enough in the New Testament to blow civilization to bits." While the figure is unfortunate, for truth is more like leaven than dynamite, yet there is a valuable suggestion in the statement. Perhaps Pastor Robinson had in mind the same thing when he told the embarking pilgrims that each new generation makes some fresh and transforming discovery out of God's Book.

What is stewardship but God's word for this generation! Recently a prominent editor declared, "One of the most noticeable of the changes that the war period has brought about is the modification of the motives of business men—their deepened sense of responsibility and their recognition of the fact that 'big business' is a public, social, and professional affair *existing only incidentally for the enrichment of business leaders.*" This is an amazing statement, but not more to be wondered at than the increasing use by newspapers and magazines of the word "stewardship" in connection with international relations. These are signs of the times, but they are *not strange to the student of the Scripture who has been waiting for the day when the world would accept Jesus' philosophy of life, which is stewardship.*

II

Sooner or later every one seeks to frame some sort of explanation of life. Very often a little child will ask a question that indicates the early yearning to discover some divine purpose behind the things that are seen and expressed.

"What is it all about?" was the way a high-school boy expressed it. Only the Christian can find anything like a satisfactory answer. Paganism attempts it and fails; thus these lines of the Persian poet:

"Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

"Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Remold it nearer to the heart's desire!"

Contrast the words of the Christian writer:

"The same old baffling questions!
O my friend, I cannot answer them.

I have no answer for myself or thee,
Save that I learned beside my mother's knee;
'All is of God that is, and is to be;
And God is good.' Let this suffice us still,
Resting in childhood trust upon his will
Who moves to his great ends unthwarted by the ill."

Whittier here indicates two important findings in the "mystery of things." First of all, "God is good," second, he "moves to his great ends." Both are vital. God is not only Love and Good, but he is supreme intelligence. He is Divine Love, but *he also has a perfectly intelligent program for the world.* When we speak of Jesus' philosophy of life, we really mean God's philosophy as revealed in the person of his Son. Jesus Christ was God's revelation of the truest and final philosophy of life. There have been other philosophies worthy of study, but the philosophy of Jesus was the climax of them all.

In his book, *The Five Great Philosophies of Life*,² William DeWitt Hyde points out the inferiority of these various attempts of men to frame a constructive purpose of life. Beginning with the philosophy of Epicurus, "that the pursuit of pleasure is the real end of life," Dr. Hyde indicates

¹ The Rubáiyát of Omar Kháyyám, xcvl and xcix.

² The Macmillan Company, New York.

the inadequacy of each of these pagan philosophies, showing that whatever there is of good in the Stoic, who preached self-control by law, or in the Platonist who practiced a mystic but selfish asceticism, or in the Aristotelian who propounded a somewhat lofty gospel—but for the few—the best in all these systems finds consummation in Jesus' philosophy of a loving stewardship. For instance, the words of Henley may be cited as Stoicism in its most attractive form:

"Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul."

Lofty as these sentiments are, they are pathetically inadequate. In spite of mention of "the gods," all real dependence upon the Almighty, or any cooperation in his program, is left out. On the other hand, all the best of Stoicism is preserved to us in these Christian lines from Robert Browning, which not only breathe of the eternal purposes, but also point to the Source of human strength, and then leave us with a song at the end of the day:

"I go to prove my soul!
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first,
I ask not; but unless God send his hail
Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,
In some time, his good time, I shall arrive:
He guides me and the bird. In his good time!"

It will be evident that the outstanding difference between the Christian conception of life and that of the pagan lies in the emphasis upon a personal God, who has a benevolent program for the saving and development of the *whole* world, and in this program there is given to every person his own responsible part. Jesus thus taught that life is a stewardship.

DAILY READINGS

First Week—First Day

It is important, first of all, to study our Lord's philosophy as *demonstrated in his own life consciousness*. In the scripture that follows are given the first words ever recorded as coming from the lips of the boy Jesus. There are at least three things in these first words that mark a new epoch in the world's thinking about life: God is a Father with a father's compassion; the Father has "business" to be transacted in the world; as the son of his Father the child's first concern should be his Father's business.

Just how revolutionary were Jesus' views will be seen by contrasting them with some of the current philosophers of that day—and perhaps of our own. Dr. Luke tells us (Acts 17. 18) that when Paul was in Athens, some years later, preaching the gospel of Jesus, "certain philosophers of the Epicurean and Stoics encountered him and some said, 'What will this babbler say?'" The difference between Christ's philosophy and that of a large part of the pagan world is indicated by comparing the words of Jesus even as a boy with Dr. Hyde's impersonation of the Epicurean preacher: "Pleasure is our great task, 'the gift of life, the end of ends.' To be happy ourselves and radiating centers of happiness to choice circles of congenial friends—this is the Epicurean ideal. The world is a vast reservoir of potential pleasures. Our problem is to scoop out for ourselves and our friends full measure of these pleasures as they go floating by. We did not make the world. It would be foolish for us to try to alter it. Our only concern is to get out of it all the pleasure we can; without troubling ourselves to put anything valuable back into it. Since it is accidental, impersonal, we owe it nothing. We simply owe ourselves as big a share of pleasure as we can grasp and hold."

What chasms of space lie between these words of pure selfishness, and those spoken by Jesus to his mother, "Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"¹ How the words burned with a sense of a divine mission!

And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the

¹King James version.

feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not; but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance: and when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him. And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions: and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?—Luke 2. 41-49.

MEDITATION

"I know, Lord, thou hast sent him—
Thou art so good to me!
But thou hast only lent him—
His heart's for thee!

"I cannot look upon him—
So strangely burned his eyes!
Hath not some grieving driven him
From Paradise?"

"But e'en when he was nursing,
A baby at my breast,
It seemed he was dispersing
The World's unrest."

—*Cale Young Rice.*

Man, by living wholly in submission to the Divine Influence, becomes surrounded with, and creates for himself, *internal pleasures* infinitely greater than any he can otherwise attain to—a state of heavenly Beatitude.—*J. P. Greaves.*

God is a kind Father. *He sets us* all in the places where he wishes us to be employed; and that employment is truly "our Father's business."—*John Ruskin.*

A PRAYER

O Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sakes didst humble thyself from thy dwelling place in heaven, teach us, we beseech thee, thy will. Cleanse our hearts from all selfish individual ambitions, and show us thy way. Grant us to be stirred with thy passion for the world, that, faithfully following thy leading for our lives, we may rejoice with thee in thy final victory, to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

First Week—Second Day

The splendor of Jesus' philosophy of life *lies primarily in his basic emphasis upon the Fatherhood of the Creator and his loving concern for every one of his creatures.* The chasm between this consciousness of Jesus and that revealed in this prayer of the pagan philosopher Seneca, is truly pathetic: "O Neptune, you may save me if you will; you may sink me if you will; but whatever happens, I shall keep my rudder true." Notice that the pagan philosopher is determined *to work out his highest destiny all alone in spite of the gods.* Jesus declares that before he was born there was an intelligent and loving Providence that called him forth to be a "witness unto the truth" and a steward of God. To this end was he born. The conviction was with him as a boy. It grew deeper and deeper in the midst of the years. Now at the end of his earthly life he can make this noble declaration at the judgment seat of the Roman ruler.

Pilate therefore entered again into the Prætorium, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered, Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee concerning me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. *To this end have I been born,*¹

¹Italics introduced here for purpose of emphasis. Not italic in Scripture text.

and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice.—John 18. 33-37.

MEDITATION

Therefore as every man is wholly God's own portion by the title of creation, so all our labors and care, all our powers and faculties must be wholly employed in the service of God, and even all the days of our life; that this life being ended, we may live with him forever.

—Jeremy Taylor.

"O strange and wild is the world of men
Which the eyes of the Lord must see—
With continents, islands, tribes, and tongues,
With multitudes bond and free!
All kings of the earth bow down to him,
And yet—he can think of me.

"For none can measure the mind of God
Or the bounds of eternity;
He knows each life that has come from him,
To the tiniest bird and bee,
For the love of his heart is so deep and wide
That it takes in even me."

—Mary E. Albright.

A PRAYER

O Lord of Hosts, who has given us our station and our weapons in thine army for the warfare of this life, setting comrades beside us and sending Jesus Christ before us; make us to feel the glory and strength of thy victorious advance and to hear triumph song where Christ marches at the head of his saints, conquering, and to conquer; for his sake. Amen.

—The Indian Prayer Cycle.

First Week—Third Day

On Sunday, February 12, 1857, the mother of Phillips Brooks wrote in her diary, "This has been a most happy day in which I have witnessed the confirmation of my son Phillips, aged twenty-one, at Dorchester." It seems strange that this great American preacher did not actually join the church, nor dedicate himself fully to the service of God,

until after he had been in the theological school for some months. For years, like many other young people, he seems to have been confused on the issue of whether or not the largest life for him lay in the absolute abandonment of self to God. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote: "No man can truly say that he has made a success of life unless he has written at the top of his life journal, 'Enter God.'" The life of Jesus teaches more than this. It is not enough to write "Enter God." He must enter and have full control. The secret of the success of Jesus is indicated in Dr. John R. Mott's statement, "The will of God was Jesus' north star." That star shone clearly through every storm and in the hour of terrific temptation. Confident that the fulfillment of life lies in doing God's will, he would not permit himself to be allured by any appeal of pagan philosophy for self-interest or self-indulgence. *Jesus knew that his highest interest lay in the fulfillment of his God-given stewardship.*

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. And the tempter came and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written,

He shall give his angels charge concerning thee:
and,

On their hands they shall bear thee up,
Lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.—Matt. 4. 1-11.

MEDITATION

"I like the man who faces what he must
With step triumphant and a heart of cheer;
Who fights the daily battle without fear,
Sees his hopes fail, yet keeps unfaltering trust
That God is God; that somehow, true and just,
His plans work out."

—Sarah Knowles Bolton.

God has a life plan for every human life in the eternal counsels of his will. When he arranged the destiny of every star and every sand-grain and every grass blade and each of those tiny insects which live but for an hour, the Creator had a thought for you and me. Our life was to be the slow unfolding of this thought, as the cornstalk from the corn or the flower from the gradually opening bud. It was a thought of what we were to be, of what we might become, of what he would have us to do with our days and years of influence with our lives.—Henry Drummond.

A PRAYER

Blessed Christ, who hast taught us that we may have life and have it more abundantly; purify our vision, we beseech thee, that being enabled to see thee as the enlarger of all life, we may perfectly abandon ourselves to thy holy will, and find in thee our largest consummation and bliss. Amen.

First Week—Fourth Day

Next to his consciousness of God, both as sovereign Lord and the heavenly Father, *the consuming compassion which Jesus always showed for the multitudes is the most conspicuous feature in the philosophy of Jesus.* He insists that love to God would best be shown in service to men. But there is more than service to sharing with God his plans for the saving of all his children. This is an innovation which love threw into philosophy that has always staggered pagan thinking. Plato could show some little concern for a small group of kindred spirits. It was a great advance when, two hundred and fifty years before Christ came, Aristotle declared, "Thou shalt devote thy utmost powers to some section of our

common social welfare, and shalt hold this end above all lesser goods, such as pleasure, money, honor." But even this high-water mark in pagan philosophy does not approach the personal compassion which Jesus showed for the individual soul. It is this love, even for the undeserving, that has amazed the pagan world. A good illustration comes from China. A few years ago, during the famine, Dr. J. W. Bradley, of Suchien, visited a village of one hundred and sixty-four families, where one hundred and forty-eight of them were living on potato vines in February, while expecting a harvest in June. As he sat down to eat his lunch that day a crowd of starving children came near. He could not eat, and dividing up his lunch he gave it out as far as it would go. A man sitting near, who had sold everything to keep his family from starving, said to him: "When you came here a few years ago I called you a foreign devil. Now I see you going about distributing bread to my people and ministering to the sick, and you say you are doing this for Jesus. Dr. Bradley," said he, "please tell me, who is Jesus?"

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:

He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,

And recovering of sight to the blind,

To set at liberty them that are bruised,

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.—Luke 4. 16-21.

MEDITATION

Jesus taught us to make every human interest we touch as precious as our own, and to treat all persons with whom we deal as members of that beneficent system of mutual good-

will which is the Kingdom of Heaven.—*William DeWitt Hyde.*

“‘I worked for men,’ my Lord will say
When we meet at the end of the King’s highway.
‘Walked with the beggar along the road,
I kissed the bondsman stung by the goad,
I bore my half of the porter’s load.
And what did you?’ my Lord will say,
‘As you traveled along the King’s highway?’”

“‘I made life sweet,’ my Lord will say
When we meet at the end of the King’s highway.
‘I smoothed the path where the thorns annoy,
I gave the mother back her boy,
I mended the children’s broken toy.
And what did you?’ my Lord will say,
‘As you traveled along the King’s highway?’”
—*Robert Davis.*

A PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help us to love men even as thou didst love them. Give us this day the spirit of thy compassion. Keep us from wounding any heart or adding to the burden of any life; and if, when this day is done, we be privileged to feel the joy of having cheered some toiler at his task, thine be the praise and the glory forever. Amen.

First Week—Fifth Day

A few years ago Theodore Roosevelt was frequently reported as saying in characteristic language, “I like my job.” Let it be said with emphasis that it is God’s desire that everyone should enjoy his task. John Ruskin declares, “We may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing Him if we are not happy ourselves.” Because Jesus will not tolerate the pagan philosophy that pleasure-seeking and self-interest are the chief end of life, *it should not be forgotten that happiness is an important item in Jesus’ philosophy.* The distinction being that Jesus teaches that happiness comes not by making it the chief quest of life but as the result of faithful stewardship. There is no doubt that the acceptance of Jesus’ philosophy of life is the only way by which the

world can finally be flooded with divine joy. All the problems of pain and pleasure which occupied so large a place in the pagan philosophies are solved by Jesus' loyalty to the program of his Father. However heroic may be the demands of his stewardship, Jesus teaches that it was his "joy" and his "meat" to do the will of God.

"O joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be."

In the mean while the disciples prayed him, saying, Rabbi, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not. The disciples therefore said one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work. . . . If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full. —John 4. 31-34; 15. 10, 11.

MEDITATION

To do the work and seize the joy of each day as it comes, so that the forward look shall not dim our eyes to the beauty along the road; and to let the light of the Christ-revealed God fall on every scene and time, leading us to regard every touch of loveliness in earth and sky, every sweet affection and fellowship, every holy thought and aspiration as signs that behind all the mystery of this strange world there is a Great Heart of Love, in whose keeping we are safe; these are little counsels to guide us in the pilgrim way.—*W. Garrett Horder.*

"Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes
After its own life working. A child's kiss
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee glad;
A poor man served by thee shall make thee rich;
A sick man helped by thee shall make thee strong;
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense
Of service which thou renderest."

—*Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

A PRAYER

O God, the day returns and brings a thousand joyous opportunities; help us to make the most of every one. Teach us to be glad. Grant that our eyes may all day long behold thy blue; that every song of bird may find an echo in our hearts; or if the sky be overcast and gathering storms have hushed the notes of birds, grant that we then may draw from out of the treasure storehouse of our souls, and still be glad in thee. Amen.

First Week—Sixth Day

Jesus reveals his consciousness that his life is a stewardship, planned by the Father, *in his constant dependence upon God. The steward must frequently report and consult with his Lord.* The Father is the source not only of the program but of the power that his human representative shall need in every part of the task. The son is still the steward and no exception to the rule. Many were the nights he spent in prayer while his disciples slept, thus showing that with the deepening sense of stewardship comes the growing burden of responsibility which drives men into a closer communion with God. So habitual had this communion become in Jesus' life that his only relief in the dark hours of Gethsemane was to lose himself in the will of God.

And he came out, and went, as his custom was, unto the mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was parted from them about a stone's cast; and he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, strengthening him.—Luke 22. 39-43.

MEDITATION

"Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.

.

"Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with love and shame."

—*Sidney Lanier.*

It is not so much resolution as renunciation, not so much courage as resignation, that we need. He that has once yielded thoroughly to God will yield to nothing but God.—*John Ruskin.*

A PRAYER

My heart needs thee, O Lord, my heart needs thee! No part of my being needs thee like my heart. . . . Be thou the strength of my heart. Be thou its fortress in temptation, its shield in remorse, its covert in the storm, its star in the night, its voice in the solitude! . . . I cannot rule this heart of mine; keep it under the shadow of thine own wings!—
George Matheson.

First Week—Seventh Day

"Does the road wind up-hill all the way?"

'Yes, to the very end.'

'Will the day's journey take the whole long day?'

'From morn to night, my friend.'

The conviction expressed in these lines by Christina Rossetti concerning the steward's pilgrimage, is expressed in still another way by the apostle Paul when he says, "It is required in a steward that he be found faithful." Both the poet and the apostle had before them the example of our Lord. *Faithfulness to the end is the crown of stewardship.* Not so much the quantity or even the character of the service, but unswerving devotion "to the very end," is what God requires of his stewards. This is the example set us by the Master himself. He endured the cross, despised the shame, and gloried in his dying breath that he had accomplished the work that his Father had given him to do. *In those majestic words, "It is finished," Jesus offers his final and overwhelming vindication of the philosophy of his life.*

These things spake Jesus; and lifting up his eyes to

heaven, he said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that the Son may glorify thee; even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given him he should give eternal life. And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, *even* Jesus Christ. I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do. . . . After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, saith, I thirst. There was set there a vessel full of vinegar; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit.—John 17. 1-4; 19. 28-30.

MEDITATION

"I cannot think or reason,
I only know he came
With hands and feet of healing
And wild heart all aflame.

"With eyes that dimmed and softened
At all the things he saw,
And in his pillared singing
I read the Marching Law."

—Willard Wattles.

The great moral combat between human life and each human soul must be single. . . . When a soul arms for battle he goes forth alone.—*Owen Meredith.*

Nothing earthly will cause me to give up my work in despair. I encourage myself in the Lord God, and go forward.—*David Livingstone.*

A PRAYER

O thou Lamb of God that takest away the sin of the world; we need not cry to thee for mercy upon us. Help us to have mercy upon ourselves. Thou hast loved us from the beginning, and thou wilt forgive us our sins when, despising our repeated unfaithfulness, we do, in deed and truth, set our faces to the cross. Help us, we beseech thee, for thy name's sake. Amen.

OUTLINE—FIRST WEEK. JESUS' PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

1. Introductory.
 - (a) Philosophy of Life.
 - (b) Christian or Pagan.
2. First Day: Philosophy Must Be Livable.
3. Second Day: Philosophy Must Include Others.
4. Third Day: Philosophy Must Include God.
5. Fourth Day: Love in Jesus' Philosophy.
6. Fifth Day: Happiness Important.
7. Sixth Day: Prayer Necessary.
8. Seventh Day: Faithfulness the Crowning Virtue.

QUESTIONS

1.
 - a. What is the power called "dynamite" by Lowell?
 - b. Is it necessary that we make "fresh and transforming discoveries" in the Bible? Why? What have you discovered for yourself in the Bible, recently?
 - c. Is God's Word to man a finished product?
 - d. What signs of acceptance of stewardship are found in business, daily press, and magazines?
 - e. How can stewardship be called Jesus' philosophy of life?
2.
 - a. Why is it important to study the life of Jesus with his philosophy of the stewardship of life?
 - b. Where may we find Jesus' philosophy of life? Does pagan philosophy teach the stewardship of life?
 - c. What sort of a Father-God did Jesus reveal at twelve years of age?
 - d. Why was the world antagonistic to the Christian philosophy when it came?
 - e. In the Epicurean's statement of life's philosophy how much truth do you find?
 - f. Does good stewardship imply that we accept the place in which we find ourselves as God's choice for us and

not make any attempt to win a higher and a better place?

3. *a.* In what sense is God our Father and what difference does it make whether we recognize it or not?
b. In what sense is the kingdom of Jesus Christ not of this world?
c. What did Jesus mean when he claimed all truth and the believers of all truth?
d. How can we be free agents and belong to God?
4. *a.* What did Robert Louis Stevenson mean in the sentence quoted, and how much further should he have gone with the declaration?
b. Whence come our temptations?
c. At what three points was Jesus attacked in the temptation?
d. What must I do before God can guide me?
e. Has God but one plan, which I must find for myself or fail?
5. *a.* What was Jesus' attitude toward humanity?
b. In revealing God to man, what elements of personality, besides intellectual understanding, must be enlisted?
c. How far is it possible to make every human interest and contact as precious as our own interests?
d. Is kindness, as an expression of love, the supreme human virtue?
6. *a.* Should we attempt any work and remain in it if we do not like our job?
b. Is there a stewardship of cheer and what do you understand by joy of life as Jesus taught it?
c. What necessary service does pain perform in our stewardship?
d. Is keeping the commandments a method of abiding in love and the love of God, or is it the result?
7. *a.* What is the first requisite to faithful stewardship—the acceptance of intellectual belief, the adopting of a program, or coming into counsel with the supreme Partner?
b. What has renunciation to do with a life of stewardship?
c. Why is it so necessary that we have emotional consciousness of the presence of God?

8. a. Have we any right to be proud when we have done a good work? To whom should we do our boasting?
- b. What does this mean—

“Like as a father pitieth his children,
So Jehovah pitieth them that fear him?”

EXERCISES

1. What is a philosophy of life; have we all one of our own? (“I know that you have a philosophy, each and all of you, and that the most interesting and important thing about you is the way in which it determines the perspective in your several worlds. . . . The philosophy which is so important in each of us is not a technical matter; it is our more or less dumb sense of what life honestly and deeply means.”—William James, *Pragmatism*, pp. 3, 4.)
2. What difference do you find between pagan and Christian philosophy of Kháyyám and Whittier?
3. Does God “move to his great ends” regardless of man, or may we with him “remold it nearer to the heart’s desire”?
4. How may we know God’s purposes for his world and for us individually?
5. What are the five great philosophies of life? Define each. (Also see Standard Dictionary.) How does Christianity include the good of all pagan philosophies?
6. How far should we seek pleasure for itself? Is suffering an indication of piety? Are we making the world better by causing pain to ourselves or to others?
7. When we fight with and for the Lord, are we given strength of our own, or is the Divine strength merely directed through us, leaving us as weak as we were before? Is there a transformation of the character of the steward?
8. Point out the wisdom of Phillips Brooks in being deliberate in choosing to follow God.
9. Write your own life plan.
10. Apply “Inasmuch as ye did it” to your own daily life.

11. What is the relation of work done and joy realized in Jesus' philosophy of stewardship?
12. Is faithfulness an active virtue? How does it work? Write your opinion.
13. What reinforcements may a Christian steward have in fighting his battles?
14. Outline at least seven characteristics of the life of stewardship which Jesus taught.

CHAPTER II

God's Stewardship

INTRODUCTORY

IN the preceding chapter we saw something of the meaning of stewardship as revealed in the life purposes of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this chapter we shall see *how God himself has chosen to place his own powers and resources under the law of stewardship*—the same law that he made for his creatures. Indeed, Jesus learned his philosophy of life from the character and purposes of his heavenly Father. When Jesus is asked "What am I here for?" he answers by telling what God is here for. We sing, sometimes,

"He saw me plunged in deep distress,
He flew to my relief;
For me he bore the shameful cross,
And carried all my grief."

But the glory of Jesus, in his life and death on earth, lies in the ultimate truth that he was perfectly serving as the divine agent of his heavenly Father. That God is not only the sovereign Lord, to whom every one of his stewards shall some day give an account, but that *he has set a high and holy example of voluntarily placing himself under the law of stewardship, is, perhaps, the most impressive fact in the whole universe.*

Matthew Arnold declared that the greatest hymn in the English language was that which begins with the familiar lines,

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died."

But Calvary was nothing more nor less than the supreme effort in a continuous appeal to humanity, which was first expressed in the Creation, *where God pledged all his resources in the ministry of humanity.* The example of such a conse-

cration is staggering when realized. "Consider him that hath endured such gainsaying of sinners against himself, that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls," is the exhortation that the writer gives in Hebrews. How shameful is the selfishness of the best of Christians when placed in the light of the voluntary consecration of God!

Commenting on this, Bishop Earl Cranston says: "It seems incredible that men, confessing themselves redeemed and regenerated, are still debating the obligations of stewardship. It cannot be that they who find their chief satisfaction in adding to their hoardings, and who pinch all they owe to God into a tithe and the tithe into a pittance, realize how desperate is their trifling with God and their own souls. The duty of making return to God inheres not in church membership but in responsible manhood. It is fundamental in our very being. Church vows simply register individual recognition of the obligation. Every man must live as unto his fellow man whether he professes to live unto God or not. The universal principle does not wait on his acceptance of it. The world has no use or place for misers, but for the world's sake a man would better be a miser than a rich profligate, rotting in his wealth, and by his contempt of decency and honor corrupting the young and outraging society. Physical self-indulgence lies in its infamy in body and mind. Luxury invites decay. This is nature's penalty for its violated law of stewardship."¹

It should be kept in mind throughout the study of this chapter that *there was only one reservation that God made when he placed all his resources at the disposal of humanity.* This was his sovereign ownership of all his creation. Nowhere in Scripture is it indicated that God for one moment gives up this supreme relationship. But it will be seen that even this reservation was made in love for the moral and spiritual benefit of humanity. Beginning with the first tragedy in the Garden of Eden, and continuing down to the industrial difficulties of the present hour, most of the trouble that has come to humanity has come as a result of man's failure sacredly to recognize this eternal truth. There can be no genuine sense of Christian stewardship unless it springs from a profound conviction of God's sovereign ownership.

¹Stewardship Fundamental in Creation, pamphlet, p. 7. The Methodist Book Concern, New York.

DAILY READINGS

Second Week—First Day

As far as known to mortal mind, *the story of creation is the first revelation of God's personal sense of stewardship.* If one is looking for the picture of a lonesome God, he can find it in this description of the Spirit of God mourning over the face of the deep, restless until all his vast resources have been placed at the disposal of "others." Sam Walter Foss wrote:

"There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the place of their self-content.
There are souls, like stars, that dwell apart,
In a fellowless firmament."

But it could not be so with God. It was contrary to his character, just as it is contrary to the character of any *good* steward to find pleasure in lavishing on himself the resources in his possession. Paul points to a cardinal principle of stewardship when he says, "None of us liveth to himself." But this principle first came from the heart of God who found it impossible to live unto himself, and yearning for a race of men who would move at the same impulses "God created man in his own image."

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. . . . And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.—Gen. 1. 1-2; 26-28.

MEDITATION

But the climax of demonstration of stewardship appears in God's application of the principle of stewardship in his sovereign relation. Being all-sufficient unto himself in his infinite attributes, he, nevertheless, counts it his chief glory to graciously administer the exhaustive resources of his material empire for the benefit of his peopled world.—*Bishop Earl Cranston.*

"A fire-mist and a planet—
 A crystal and a cell—
 A jellyfish and a saurian,
 And caves where the cave-men dwell:
 Then a sense of law and beauty,
 A face turned from the clod—
 Some call it evolution,
 And others call it God."
 —*William Herbert Carruth.*

A PRAYER

O Eternal God, our everlasting Father, we praise thee, we adore thee, we worship thee. Surely thou hast created us in thine own image, for we are not at rest, save in thy presence. Glorify thyself in us to-day, that, being good stewards of thy boundless compassion, we may be faithful children of so gracious a Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Second Week—Second Day

"God teaching stewardship" might well be the caption to the story of the garden of Eden. Parenthood involves responsibility. The father is bound to pass on his principles to his children. *Creation was a supreme venture on the part of God in producing a breed of men who would share with him the enjoyment and administration of his boundless resources.* No yearning mother could bend more wistfully over the cradle of her child than did God over the cradle of the race. Only a parent who has knelt beside some little cot to pray that his first-born might be a blessing to the world, can know how eagerly God planned that garden "to grow every tree that is pleasant," and how yearningly he desired that the

child should share his Father's passion for the welfare of the world. It is not quite true that "God had only one Son and he made him a missionary"; God has had millions of sons, and from the beginning he has sought to make them all missionaries in the truest sense that everyone should regard his life as a sacred trust.

An excited manufacturer confronted with a strike among his employees was overheard to say, "I am just childish enough to believe that what is mine is my own, and when my old dad turned over to me this mill, along with his gold watch and the old family horse, he meant that I should do with it just as I pleased." On the contrary, God was trying to help his first children to avoid this false philosophy. *Not as owner, but as caretaker* was Adam installed "to dress the garden and keep it," and the injunction "Of one tree thou shalt not eat" was God's loving way of continuously advertising to the son the *propriatorship* of the Father. In its legal sense that first offense was "a challenge of God's right to control the domain he had created," but it was even more than this—it was the refusal of a child to follow his Father in consecration of life and resources for the up-building of the world. Tragedy alone could be the result. They hid themselves from the presence of the Lord.

And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. . . . And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. . . . And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. . . . And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the

trees of the garden. And Jehovah God called unto the man.—Gen. 2. 8, 9, 15-17; 3. 6, 8, 9.

MEDITATION

The love that builds palatial homes and fills them with luxurious furnishings and costly statuary is not love for God or humanity. I do not envy homes built for family prestige. I tremble for their inmates lest they banish Christ, who loves the lowly, lonely, hungry, shivering, neglected ones. He allows comfort, but not luxury until all God's claims have been met, and never were more millions facing starvation than to-day right in the heart of Christendom. It is surely not God's time for building fortunes out of his bounty, or for the American people to be untrue to their stewardship of freedom and equal opportunities for all peoples.—*Bishop Earl Cranston.*

"Whether we climb, whether we plod,
Space for one task the scant years lend—
To choose some path that leads to God,
And keep it to the end."

—*Lizette Woodworth Reese.*

A PRAYER

*How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God!
How great is the sum of them!
If I should count them, they are more in number than the
sand:
When I awake, I am still with thee.*

*Search me, O God, and know my heart:
Try me, and know my thoughts;
And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.*

—The Psalmist.

Second Week—Third Day

It is a long road that leads from the failure of our first parents to such a cry as came from George Matheson's lips: "O love that wilt not let me go." The most touching part of the story of the garden of Eden is where, when the tragedy is done and the persons are still in hiding, a grieving

Father goes out seeking his rebellious children. "And Jehovah God called unto the man." It was love that called. In the last analysis the glory of God's stewardship lies in the fact that it is voluntary and free. So must it be with his children. Better have Adam fail in his trust than not be free to fail. But love persists. So God sets himself to the task of gathering up the wreckage of Eden in order to start over again in working out his eternal purposes of making the kind of manhood that will share with him his compassion for the world.

From Adam to Abraham is the story of a long struggle with the forces of sin and ignorance, but God is making progress. In this scripture it is evident that God has found in Abraham a man who from the heart feels the same sense of stewardship that God felt. Indeed, it is God, the Supreme Steward, who is crying out in compassion for Sodom:

Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: . . . And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? . . . And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for the ten's sake.—Gen. 12. 1, 2; 18. 22-24, 32.

MEDITATION

My brethren, are we in this succession? Does the cry of the world's need pierce the heart, and ring even through the fabric of our dreams? . . . I am amazed how easily I become callous. . . . I so easily become enwrapped in the soft wool of self-indulgency, and the cries from far and near cannot reach my easeful soul. "Why do you wish to return?" I asked a noble missionary who had been invalided home: "Why do you wish to return?" "Because I can't sleep thinking of them!" But, my brethren, except when I spend a day with my Lord, the trend of my life is

quite another way. I cannot think about them because I am so inclined to sleep!—*J. H. Jowett.*

"O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

"O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be."

—*George Matheson.*

A PRAYER

O God, who hast commanded us to be perfect, as thou our Father in heaven art perfect, put into our hearts, we pray thee, a continual desire to obey thy holy will. Teach us day by day what thou wouldst have us do, and give us grace and power to fulfill the same. May we never from love of ease decline the path which thou pointest out, nor for fear of shame turn away from it. Amen.—Dean Henry Alford.

Second Week—Fourth Day

Henry Ward Beecher tells of a little girl who interrupted a prayer at her mother's knee to ask, "Mamma, what is God doing all day long?" The child had begun to think and it occurred to her that a real God must have a larger task than even keeping children and good folks safe during the hours of the dark. Many *good* people remain children in their thinking of God and become mere dwarfs of the Kingdom, because it has never greatly dawned upon them that God has a world redemption program, or that they have anything to do about it.

"Nothing to do in this world of ours,
Where weeds spring up with the fairest flowers,
Where smiles have only a fitful play,

And hearts are breaking every day."

"Nothing to do! Thou Christian soul,
Wrapping thee 'round in thy selfish stole,
Off with the garments of sloth and sin,
Christ, thy Lord, hath a kingdom to win."

From the beginning *this was God's work to create in men a moral responsibility as "my brother's keeper."* There was no other way to make a moral world. Perhaps no one in the Old Testament expresses more passionately this burden for the salvation of the race than does Moses, the chosen leader of the Israelitish people in the day of their great sin. And again *it is God in Moses* who is speaking:

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto Jehovah; peradventure I shall make atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto Jehovah, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.—Exod. 32. 30, 31, 32.

In later years Moses perceives even more clearly that his longing for the regeneration of his people was really imparted to him from the heart of God, to whom he commends them in his last hours:

And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee.—Deut. 30. 1-3.

MEDITATION

Do something! No man is born with a mortgage on his soul; but every man is born a debtor to Time. Meet this obligation before you find too late that your life is impoverished and you cannot redeem it.—*Martha Bird Steinmetz.*

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in his justice,
Which is more than liberty.

If our love were but more simple,
We should take him at his word;
And our lives would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord."

—Frederick W. Faber.

A PRAYER

O Lord, our heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day, defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we may fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all our doings, being ordered by thy covenants, may be righteous in thy sight. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—Gelasian Sacramentary, 494 A.D.

Second Week—Fifth Day

The failure of the Hebrew nation to accept its God-given mission is the most conspicuous refusal of divine stewardship in all history. But the love of God shines still more brightly through the gloom. Other peoples may take warning: Israel forfeited its leadership both in the Church of God and among the nations through its failure. But God will "not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth." So even the darkness of the great rejection is relieved by the increasing number of glorious souls who give voice to the stewardship of God, and as prophet evangelists reveal to an ever-widening constituency the pleading heart of the heavenly Father.

In the scripture that follows we have come to that part in the history of the Kingdom when political degeneration is rapidly, increasingly evident. King after king has risen, rebelled against God, and departed. Nevertheless, God still pleads with his people. The prophet Moses has altogether associated his own personality, first with his people, in exhorting them back to God; and, second, when the backsliding seems beyond healing, with Jehovah, his Lord in voicing Heaven's cry, "How can I give thee up, O Ephraim?"

Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. . . . And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth. . . . How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? *how* shall I cast thee off, Israel? *how* shall I make thee as Admah? *how* shall I set thee as Zeboiim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee.—Hos. 6. 1, 3; 11. 8, 9.

MEDITATION

“O Joy supreme! I know the Voice
Like none beside on earth or sea;
Yea, more, O soul of mine, rejoice,
By all that he requires of me,
I know what God himself must be.”

—John Greenleaf Whittier.

God will keep no nation in supreme place that will not do supreme duty.—William McKinley.

I think my soul was never so drawn out in intercession for others as it has been this night; I hardly ever so longed to live to God, and to be altogether devoted to him; I wanted to wear out my life for him. . . . I wrestled for the ingathering of souls, for multitudes of poor souls, personally, in many distant places. I was in such an agony, from sun half-an-hour high till near dark, that I was wet all over with sweat; but O, my dear Lord did sweat blood for such poor souls: I longed for more compassion.—David Brainerd.

A PRAYER

Set my heart on fire with the love of thee, most loving Father. . . . For to him that loveth, nothing is difficult, nothing is impossible. . . . O may love fill and rule my heart! For then there will spring up and be cherished between thee and me a line of character, and union of will, so that I may choose and refuse what thou dost. May thy will be done in me and by me forever. Amen.—Paradise for the Christian Soul.

Second Week—Sixth Day

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

This loving gratitude which Isaac Watts expressed as he surveyed the “wondrous cross” is exactly that which God had been trying to arouse in human hearts from the beginning. In the previous studies of this week we have seen God pleading through his various servants. Finally he said, “I will send my own Son.” Calvary is only another phase of the love of God that first placed man in the garden of Eden as the caretaker of a wonderful world, that bore with him through long years of rebellion, that called to him through the law and the prophets, and in the fullness of time made the climax of all appeals in the coming of the Child of Bethlehem. *Accordingly, God’s stewardship is best realized in the incarnation that began in Bethlehem and ended in the supreme tragedy at Calvary.*

If we could only see beforehand the beauty and strength of the beings that our heavenly Father means us to finally become—if we could just catch the vision of *this*, we would better understand both the love and patience of God, and how all the agony of the ages will be more than repaid in the end by the re-creation and final redemption of man. A humble illustration of the vaster truth is to be found in the story of that mother who, much to the disgust of her neighbors, bore patiently through many years the waywardness of her grown-up son. Repeatedly refusing the invitations of her other children to share their more comfortable homes, at length she was rewarded in seeing the drunkard soundly converted. Then she trembled as she thought of those days when her load had seemed almost unbearable and she had been tempted to go away. “Oh, suppose I had left Charlie!” she wrote, only to add immediately, “But then I never could have left him, for I love him.” The thing that forever remains a source of amazement to John is the unwearied love of God as indicated by this scripture.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in

the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. . . . He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. . . . For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.—John 1. 1-4; 10-14; 3. 16.

MEDITATION

“Immortal Love, forever full,
Forever flowing free,
Forever shared, forever whole,
A never-ebbing sea.”

“Our outward lips confess the name
All other names above;
Love only knoweth whence it came
And comprehendeth love.”

—John G. Whittier.

Self-sacrifice is an everyday affair. By it we live. Without it society could not go on for an hour. . . . I mean by self-sacrifice any diminution of my possessions, pleasures or powers, in order to increase those of others. . . . The greatest conceivable sacrifice is when I give myself.—Palmer.

A PRAYER

O Love divine, who, in infinite mercy, hast sought after all men, not willing that any should perish, hear the prayer of thy servant. From the beginning thou hast given us all things: we give thee back thine own. O thou, who didst dedicate, in loving stewardship, thy boundless resources, even unto Calvary, for our redemption, receive, we humbly beseech thee, this our consecration of time and talent, life and possessions,

to the glory of thy holy kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Second Week—Seventh Day

As the incarnation was God's supreme appeal, so *Pentecost was the final act in the fulfillment of Divine stewardship*. The age-long task had been to make man in God's own image. The law and the prophets could create a fear and abhorrence of sin, Bethlehem and Calvary could inspire a love for the character of a God who forgives and seeks to the uttermost; but how can a man lift himself by his boot straps? and how can a man rise victorious over his sins, or be a good steward like unto his Father? It is impossible without some superhuman help. Man can love the higher law. He can cry as desperately as Carlyle, "I will live a white life, if I go to hell for it!" But all human efforts must end in the wail of Saul of Tarsus, "O wretched man that I am," were it not that God made one final appropriation of his divine resources and at Pentecost inaugurated the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. *Henceforth the victorious life is the privilege of every child of God*, even as Jesus promised, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you."

"Come, Holy Ghost, in love,
Shed on us from above
Thine own bright ray!
Divinely good thou art;
Thy sacred gifts impart
To gladden each sad heart:
O come to-day!"

And, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, *said he*, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence. They, therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and

Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Acts 1. 4-8.

MEDITATION

It was through the amazing tragedy of Calvary and the marvelous transitions of Pentecost that the ageless mystery of the Trinity became radiant with meaning. Then they that sat in darkness saw a great light by which they read that neither with God in the heavens, nor among men on the earth, is there an undistributive reserve of life, or love, or power, or wisdom, or any resources, material or spiritual, that is to be sacred to the sole use or enjoyment of any holder or claimant. That is to say, God made love the keynote of creation, and from the beginning ordained and exemplified the principle of stewardship as manifesting supreme expression.—*Bishop Earl Cranston.*

"If I have been less true, less strong,
 Than I have power to be,
 And followed, weakly, after wrong
 When right appealed to me,
 Dear God, forgive,
 And give to me that insight clear, defined
 Which marks the progress of the soul;
 For they who seek shall find."

—*Lena Blinn Lewis.*

A PRAYER

O Blessed Holy Spirit, who hast promised to make intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered, hear us, we beseech thee, at the beginning of this, another day. So illumine our minds by thy holy presence, and so purify and strengthen our hearts by thy mighty power, that all day long, in word and thought and deed, we may be faithful stewards of the Divine Grace intrusted to the children of God, from the foundation of the world; to the glory of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OUTLINE—SECOND WEEK. GOD'S STEWARD- SHIP

1. Introductory: God Is Ruled by Stewardship.
2. First Day: Creation an Act of Stewardship.
3. Second Day: Stewardship in the Garden.
4. Third Day: Salvaging Mankind Is Stewardship.
5. Fourth Day: Social Responsibility Is Stewardship.
6. Fifth Day: Refusal of Stewardship.
7. Sixth Day: Supreme Example of Stewardship.
8. Seventh Day: Pentecost, Fulfillment of Stewardship.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* What is the source of Jesus' philosophy of life? How did Jesus know the divine will?
b. Why does God obey his own laws?
c. What should be the difference between our purposes and God's?
d. What is the relation of law to liberty? Are these laws of expansion as well as restriction? Which is stewardship, expanding or narrowing?
e. Has God done his best for us? Can he, before we pray?
f. Are Christians really selfish or only blind, or both? Who is a hypocrite? (Answer for yourself.)
g. In what sense must a man "live unto his fellow men"?
h. What is the fundamental principle of Christian stewardship?
2. *a.* Where do we find the first hint of God's personal stewardship?
b. Did Adam and Eve own the garden of Eden? Did the Israelites own the land of Canaan? Does a manufacturer own his factory? Does a farmer own the soil of his farm?
c. For whom does God work? To whom is he responsible? How are we like him?

3. *a.* What was man's commission in the world from the beginning?
- b.* Do "all things work together for good" to those who love God?
- c.* What did Jesus mean by "ye shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect"?
- d.* Are comfortable homes filled with luxuries and beautiful furnishings sinful?
- e.* Is it possible to be good, and to enjoy the best things in life, both material and spiritual?
4. *a.* Is there any virtue in being good because we are afraid to be bad, or because of the law, or because somebody else says what is good?
- b.* Why did God set himself to salvage mankind?
- c.* Is stewardship a modern doctrine, or God's eternal plan for himself and for man?
- d.* Would you call Abraham a steward of God?
- e.* Would you say that the man who cannot be a friend cannot be a faithful steward. Why?
5. *a.* What does God do all day?
- b.* Why should we ask ourselves, "Am I my brother's keeper?"?
- c.* What made it possible for Moses to offer himself for the Israelites?
- d.* How may we forget God?
6. *a.* Why did God take the commission to save the world away from the Israelites?
- b.* Why should God not be discouraged?
- c.* Why did God not destroy the Israelites?
- d.* How can we know what God is?
- e.* Is it true yesterday and to-day that "God will keep no nation in supreme place that will not do supreme duty"?
7. What is the chief virtue required of stewards?
8. *a.* How may we know the presence of God in our own life?
- b.* What is the nature of the power we receive from personal contact with God?

EXERCISES

1. Who owns? What does it mean to own? Can one who

lives alone own anything? Can he be pious? What difference does it make to you that God is the Sovereign Owner of all things?

2. Is covetousness the same as miserliness, or selfish spending, or what is it?
3. In what sense is God eternally the same? As Owner, Father, Lover, Creator, Sustainer?
4. Can we contribute anything to the happiness of God? Are we as necessary to him as he is to us? Could God find his supreme happiness in the world before man came? Can anyone find his highest happiness in doing as he pleases?
5. How did man differ from the other animals? What is a person? Who is the Supreme Person? Does personality always include responsibility, privilege, dominion?
6. What is your idea of evolution? How does God work?
7. What is the limit of desire to possess in man? How may it be controlled and directed?
8. Is the Christian steward conscious of self-sacrifice? What becomes of self-sacrifice in fellowship with God?
9. List the evidences, found in your own experience, that the gospel of stewardship is being accepted by the world.
10. Write an argument to prove that our Father wants his children to make the most of themselves.
11. Write a paragraph on how to be a friend and a Christian steward showing that they both depend upon the ability to become saturated with the personality of another.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Think carefully over your relations to God and write down the ways in which you are conscious of the presence of God, the ways in which you find you are selfish.
2. What plans are you making for personal enlargement in partnership with God?

CHAPTER III

Jesus Teaching Stewardship

INTRODUCTORY

"DON'T you think the word 'stewardship' is vague? Many people do not know what you mean by it. Why not use 'consecration' instead?" It was a young minister who asked the question at a recent conference in the Middle West; and in spite of the outburst of "No! No!" that followed, there will be many who, seeing these words, will recall that they themselves have asked a similar question. Indeed, it ought to be frankly admitted that "stewardship" is *vague*, but, on the other hand, so are many other words and phrases that Jesus used. That is to say, they are vague until some generation comes along really to practice the thing that Jesus taught, and then the word is alive—born again with new meaning. So it must be with the word "steward," which Jesus recoinced and filled with wonder-working content. We must discover to the church of this generation both the meaning and the word; they conquer together.

One day Phillips Brooks visited that wonderful blind, deaf, and dumb girl, Helen Keller, and through her remarkable teacher he told her that God was very near, that he was her "unseen Father who loved her and would not let go her hand either in life or in death." And the child answered, "I have often felt him. He comes like warmth, *but I did not know before what to call him.*" In commenting, Newell Dwight Hillis says: "From that day the girl went from one realm of knowledge to another. She passed from kingdom to kingdom. Her tomb began to enlarge. Great windows were opened. At last she walked forth, free!" So it will be with the church's vision of the stewardship of life. For a long time we have felt Jesus' teaching as a passing warmth,

or a flash of light, or a glorious dream, but without enough of clearness to give it name. But a new day is dawning. Even now new light is breaking upon the word of God. Men are beginning to take seriously Jesus' explanation of life. There are numerous signs: "We are coming to see that it is a disgrace for a man to die rich," says one; while a young woman voices the same spirit after her escape from a building where scores burned to death, crying for days: "I did not even try to save anybody else. I thought only of myself! I thought only of myself!" Here are at least the beginnings of good stewardship, *but we must call it by name* until the world recognizes this golden philosophy of Jesus, and perceives that there is no other way under the heavens whereby fetters may be broken and the world saved. "Stewardship" is God's word for our generation. We must voice it and practice it in our churches and in our industries and in all our personal relations—we must, indeed, make it the burning slogan of our age until men actually visualize what Jesus taught concerning the stewardship of life and property and all.

Just how the vagueness about stewardship will be dissipated may be suggested by a consideration of Jesus' teaching concerning God's sovereign ownership. At least sixteen of his parables reveal his emphasis upon this Old-Testament doctrine, and yet here is one of the most stubbornly resisted truths of the Scriptures. Indeed, how few, even among "tithers," really "see through the eyes of God" and regard seriously God's *personal* ownership of *all* property, and yet the tithe *was unquestionably instituted as an acknowledgment of God's personal ownership of land and wealth and life*. But let a person once see this truth and realize its practical implications, and God not only becomes a Presence personal and real, but the entire conception of one's relation to all industry and the kingdom of God is revolutionized. As an English writer puts it: "It makes a vast difference in the long run whether a man has at the back of his mind, in all his judgments, the principle, 'One has a right to do as one likes with one's own,' in the crude sense of what is his and may so remain, without breach of the law of the land; or, on the other hand, the idea of property as a social trust or stewardship. Change of attitude here is the most 'practical' thing that can happen to men." Thus it seems evident that

"stewardship" will cease to be vague just as soon as we accept and put into practice the plain teaching of our Lord.

Moreover, the word "steward" is vital, not only because Jesus and his disciples coined it, but because it is difficult to find any other word that will exactly express the same meaning. When Jesus began to teach his philosophy of life he was compelled to seek for words with which to portray the true relationship of a man to God and his kingdom. It is an interesting study to list the words that he used to this end: "servant," "husbandman," "child," "sons," "friends," "stewards," are some of them. However, it is evident that none of them can be used to the total exclusion of the others. Each one is not only freighted with a broad aspect of the precious message that Jesus taught but each has also the limitation of being unable to suggest the whole truth. *Accordingly, no word is altogether satisfactory, but among these words the one that Jesus emphasizes as most broadly covering the whole scope of human relationship to God is "steward."*

Such words as "trustee," or "agent," or "representative," are cold, and are at best merely suggestive of the meaning that Jesus puts into the Oriental word "steward," for in the Orient the steward was not only a trustee and a servant, but still more, he was the friend. So close was this friendship that it is written of Abraham's steward, "All the goods of his master are in his hands." Likewise Joseph was steward in the house of Potiphar, and the confidence and esteem in which he was held is evidenced by the statement that the master "left all that he had in Joseph's hand." Thus when Jesus is searching for some word that will express both the responsibility and friendly relationship which God desires shall exist between men and their heavenly Father, he goes over into the Old Testament and brings forth the picture of an Oriental home where the master has placed the moral and even physical and spiritual welfare of all concerned in the hands of his trusted friend, the steward.

Accordingly, Jesus teaches that all men are stewards, whatever other relation may exist between them and God. *We are stewards by God's appointment. The only question is, what kind?* The fact that the steward is the friend of his Master does not release him from accounting for his Friend's goods, nor does sonship cancel the obligation of faithfulness

in dealing with the Father's resources. The child is just as much a thief if he steals from his father as from anyone else. On the other hand, consider the man who rebels against the king in his kingdom. His rebellion will not for a minute change his *status quo*. Though he hide "his Lord's money" in the ground or in selfish expenditure or lavish extravagance of any kind, some day the Lord of that servant cometh, and he will remind him of that time when the Master gave to him all the resources he ever had, and said unto him, "Occupy till I come."

So Jesus taught the great philosophy of life and clustered his teachings around the word "steward." It is doubtful, therefore, if a better word can be found to express the general relation of a man to the supreme Person and to the Kingdom. Jesus not only uses it, but evidently has it in the background of his thinking when he does not use it. Many of his parables, such as the parables of the vineyard, the talents, the good Samaritan, and the prodigal son, bear witness that while the word "steward" or "stewardship" is not always specifically used, yet Jesus' philosophy is perfectly clear. This is developed still further in the "Daily Readings."

DAILY READINGS

Third Week—First Day

It is evident that the difference between God's stewardship and our own lies in the fact that God voluntarily set all his own resources to the grand task of the regeneration and development of man, *while we are only asked to use, for the same purpose, not what is our own but what has been freely given us, in trust, by our loving Father*. While God is only responsible to himself, we, his creatures, are eternally responsible to him as the Creator. Thus while man is asked to be a *good* steward by *voluntarily* following the example of the Great Steward, yet he cannot, in any case, escape stewardship, for the very good reason that he did not make himself and cannot equip himself.

Right here is found the reason for the shortsightedness of the so-called "self-made man" who cannot see beyond the

doctrine of human ownership. We laugh at little Jack Horner, who "put in his thumb and drew out a plum" from the pie *he did not make*, and cried, "What a big boy am I!" But, after all, there is not a very great distance between the childishness of that small boy and that of the grown-up child who gloats over what *he* "owns" and what *he* has done "all myself"—all the while deaf to the Voice which says, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

An illustration of how this blindness to the sovereign ownership of God kills the sense of stewardship can be found almost any day in the magazines or newspapers: "Why, my old dad built this business from the ground up; built it with his keen Yankee brain, and in doing that he gave this town the biggest shove it ever had. He always paid good wages, and he looked out for his men, but he knew who *owned* the shop, you bet, and who ran it! He hadn't any partner until he took me in, and when Tom undertakes to tell me that I have got any partners outside of himself, I figure it is up to me to prove he is mistaken—even if I have to show him that I haven't any partner at all. I have got a little business pride!" The contrast between this quotation from a magazine story and Jesus' parable of the good steward is perfectly evident. *Our Lord teaches that the recognition of God as the chief Partner is fundamental to any successful life.*

And the Lord said, Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath. But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the unfaithful. . . . And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.—Luke 12. 42-46; 48.

MEDITATION

We must not approach the principle of tithing from any

narrow or legalized standpoint, but surely we should dedicate to the service of God at least one tenth of our income as an acknowledgment of God's ownership of all.—*J. J. Stowe.*

Shall I hold on with both hands to every paltry possession? All I have teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea."
—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

A PRAYER

O, gracious and patient Jesus, take, we pray thee, the blindness from our eyes that we may see and prize the honor thou hast conferred in making us stewards of God, that we may truly realize that, "Every man is wholly God's own portion by the title of creation" so all our labors and cares, all our powers and faculties, must be wholly employed in the service of God and even all the days of our life, that this life being ended we may live with him forever.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

Third Week—Second Day

Jesus also taught that the obligation of stewardship rested not only on the fact of God's sovereign ownership, but upon the heritage left by other stewards who had labored as fellow workers with God in his task of world redemption. Indeed, this latter truth is the basis of patriotism and is echoed in every patriotic appeal. This was the thought in the background of Lincoln's address at Gettysburg: "In a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. . . . It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work." In similar vein recall John McCrae's oft quoted words:

"To you from failing hands we throw
 The torch; be yours to hold it high;
 If ye break faith with us who die,
 We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
 In Flanders fields."

In such noble appeals as these from the old to the new generation we have a mighty challenge to stewardship. From the beginning God has preserved a noble succession of Good Stewards of God. While Jesus' parable of the vineyard has its individual application, primarily it is a patriotic appeal to national responsibility for the kingdom of God. The Owner had set up a wonderful vineyard and intrusted it to the Jewish people. He had built walls about it for protection, and made every provision for a fruit-bearing nation. He had sent his prophets to exhort and warn and instruct; at the last he sent his own Son to remind them of their mission.

Hear another parable: There was a man that was a householder, who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country. And when the season of the fruits drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, to receive his fruits. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first; and they did unto them in like manner. But afterward he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen, when they saw the son, said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and take his inheritance. And they took him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, who shall render him the fruits in their seasons.—Matt. 21. 33-41.

MEDITATION

Since the dominion of man was first asserted over the ocean, three thrones of mark above all others have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, of Venice, and of England. Of the first only the memory remains; of the second,

the ruins; the third, which inherits their greatness, if she forget their example may be led through a prouder eminence to a less pitiless destruction.—*John Ruskin.*

“For the youth they gave and the blood they gave,
For the strength that was our stay,
For every marked or nameless grave
On the shell-torn Flanders way—
We who are whole of body and soul,
We have a debt to pay!

“For the youth they gave and the blood they gave
We must render back the due;
For every marked or nameless grave
We must pay with a service true;
Till the scales stand straight with even weight,
And the world is a world made new.”

—*Theodosia Garrison.*

A PRAYER

O, Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest thy people like a flock, lead us this day! We thank thee for the night; but standing on the threshold of the day, we shrink back but for thee. The tasks are so great, and we are so small. The burdens are so heavy, and we are so weak. Surely the responsibilities are greater than we can bear alone. Let thy Heavenly Spirit sustain us with thy power, making us to be not unworthy sons of thy servants, our fathers, so that, like them, having borne the burdens in the heat of the day, we may at last be led into thy fold by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Third Week—Third Day

While Jesus teaches that God's ownership, together with the heritage left us from the past, furnish an all-sufficient basis for man's stewardship, yet he clearly points out *the need of the world as the compelling and immediate challenge to stewardship*. “Am I my brother's keeper?” can never be a fit question on the lips of a Christian. John has learned the lesson from his Master when he says, “Whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide

in him?" (1 John 3. 17.) Here is a terrifying deduction that the Church has only partially considered.

A few years ago in the hour of the great world need, Herbert Hoover said of the people in the United States, "The nation spends at least \$1,000,000 a day, or \$365,000,000 a year, in superfluous eating at hotels and restaurants." Condemnation in the statement lay not so much in the waste of money, but in the waste *at a time when vast multitudes were starving to death in the near and farther East*. While public opinion has been Christianized sufficiently in America to be ashamed when some mother with her brood are found starved or frozen in one of our cities, yet the challenge of human need has not yet compelled the passion for stewardship, except in isolated cases. True, a spasm of protest spreads over a community when suffering and need emerge with conspicuousness, but the sense of responsibility is very shallow and limited by geographical or economic barriers. The heart of man admits the claim of any "real need," but still asks, "Who is my neighbor?" The stewardship passion that Jesus possessed and would impart will be able to cross oceans, penetrate industry, and recognize spiritual as well as material needs. Such a letter as the following one, which comes burning from the foreign missionary field, illustrates that Jesus' story of the good Samaritan still needs to be interpreted to a church which seems to have more wealth than power:

"Dr. O——: It seems to me that the dear church at home has not yet seen these things. If they had, they would not leave me alone in this district in this day. There ought to be at least three missionaries; now there is only one. There is no one coming on, no one learning the language, no one getting India into his life with all that it means to a missionary. Please understand, I am not complaining to you. Bless your heart! You are doing all that a man can do, and we appreciate that, but I only wish that the church could see and realize this unparalleled opportunity.

"Somehow to-day I am broken-hearted. We seem so far away from America, and I am almost asking myself, 'Do the people at home care?'"

But he, desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? Jesus made answer and said,

A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on *them* oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.—Luke 10. 29-34.

MEDITATION

When will Christians finally learn to connect the cry of Cain repudiating responsibility for his brother's welfare, with that previous tragedy in Eden where Cain's parents tried to usurp ownership of God's material resources, and then fled to hide themselves in the recesses of the garden? He who most easily is deaf to God's claim of personal ownership of all possessions will not find it difficult to stand unmoved in the presence of human need.—R. S. C.

"They may not need me,
Yet they might;
I let my heart be
Just in sight—

"A smile so small
As mine might be
Precisely their
Necessity."

—Unknown.

A PRAYER

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee. And every life I touch, do thou by thy Holy Spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak or the life I live. In Christ's name. Amen.—David R. Porter.

Third Week—Fourth Day

In the Introductory to this chapter it was declared that in Jesus' teachings *there is no conflict between stewardship and*

sonship. It is significant that He who so strongly insisted on the sovereignty of the Creator is the very one who has taught the world to think of God as our heavenly Father. More than forty times in Matthew's Gospel alone is it recorded that Jesus so speaks of the "Father." Although the expression is also used several times in the Old Testament, it was, in fact, a new and wonderful revelation from the lips of the Master that God yearned for man. God yearned that men should cry out to him as "Father"—

"Father, I stretch my hands to thee,
No other help I know."

Now, it might be supposed, and frequently is, that the son is exempt from the exactions of stewardship. Said a very pious-speaking soul in central New York: "I cannot think that my dear heavenly Father is so exacting as to want me to set apart a portion of my income for the Kingdom. Why, that takes the joy out of religion for me." It might be added that there are many others whose religious rapture is cooled when money is mentioned, but it is not the fault of a good God. What shall be said of this new attempt to reconcile the law with the gospel? Did Jesus come to abolish or fulfill the law? Is there any difference between the stewardship of the Old Testament and that of the New, other than that *in the one instance the compulsion is of law, and in the other, of love? If one refuses to obey the law "for love's sweet sake," is the law thereby abolished?*

President Hyde says, "A true mother is never half as sentimentally altruistic toward her child as a grandmother or an aunt; she does not hesitate to reprove and correct when that is what the child needs to suppress the low and lazy, and arouse the higher and stronger self." This statement will suggest why the heavenly Father cannot excuse his "son" from stewardship. He did not so shield his First-Born. He will not excuse his other children, for in his stewardship the child finds the fulfillment of his life. The prodigal son will always find his Father's arms outstretched to him; *but if he returns, it must always be with full recognition of the sovereignty of his Father*—and it must be a return to a faithful stewardship. No slacker can be happy in God's household.

But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.—Luke 15. 17-24.

MEDITATION

One who is so far gone in "grace" as not to obey the law is an undesirable citizen, whether in the civil or in the religious kingdom.—*Col. E. W. Halford.*

"I am a child in the darkness,
A little frightened child.
The winds are moaning about me
And the storm in my heart is wild.
My fear would increase to terror,
Only wherever I stand,
It is mine to feel, for my comfort,
The clasp of my Father's hand."

—*Marianne Farningham.*

A PRAYER

"Infinite and Holy One, whom we know as our Father and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we devoutly thank thee for the mercy that created us from dust, and for the greater mercy that has created us anew by thy heavenly adoption as thy children. . . . Grant, we pray, that thy loving kindness may be followed by our obedience; and do thou confirm our best purposes by renewing our sense of thy presence, that we may both keep thy hand and accept thy dealings with us in the spirit of childlike trust, and by the help of that dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

Third Week—Fifth Day

There had been a fight in a certain New England Legislature. A pernicious measure had been brought up for passage. A congressman, who had violated his conscience and his promise, was being reprov'd by the minority leaders for deserting the moral element of the State. Finally he excused himself by exclaiming, "But a man has to think of his future once in a while." The reply came like a flame—"Then, thank God, I have no future!"

Jesus taught that a man may dare to trust God and do right. *It is fundamental in Jesus' philosophy of life that the future of the faithful steward is provided for.* It is a vital hour in one's life when one feels this confidence that "the Father knoweth the things" his children have need of. He does not promise luxuries, but he does promise to supply all *needs*, provided the King's business is kept *first*. The good steward will not seek his own. He says, "I must be about my Father's business." His own future he leaves to the will of God, knowing that only thus can the largest fulfillment of life come for him. Paul had this confidence when he wrote: "What things were gain to me these I counted loss for Christ." It has been the repeated tragedy throughout the history of the church, that so few of us have dared to take, at face value, these wonderful promises of our Lord to his stewards.

But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.—Matt. 6. 30-33.

MEDITATION

I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true; I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right; stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.—*Abraham Lincoln.*

“‘A man must live.’ We justify
 Low shift and trick to treason high.
 But is it so? Pray tell me why
 Life at such cost you have to buy.
 In what religion were you told,
 “A man must live?”

“There are times when a man must die,
 Imagine, for a battle cry
 From soldiers, with a sword to hold—
 From soldiers, with the flag unrolled—
 The coward’s whine, this liar’s lie,
 ‘A man must live.’”

—Charlotte Perkins Stetson.

A PRAYER

Lord, I know not what I ought to ask of thee; thou only knowest what I need. Thou lovest me better than I know how to love myself. O Father, give to thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask. I dare not ask either for crosses or consolations. I simply present myself before thee: I open my heart to thee. Behold my needs which I know not myself; see and do according to thy tender mercy. Amen.—François de la Mothe Fénelon.

Third Week—Sixth Day

While Jesus taught that life consisteth not in the abundance of a man’s possessions, he knew that most of us would be tempted to think otherwise. Indeed, the question, “What is a man worth?” gets an answer which generally indicates that not the moral or spiritual or educational value of the man is in the mind, but his “money” or “property” value. Knowing, then, the value that man would place on *material* resources, it is not strange that *Jesus taught that the average man’s attitude toward the kingdom of God could be discovered by his attitude toward his property.* The same thought is put in the language of a Western physician, “You can tell a man’s interest in anything by the way he puts his money into it.” *If a disciple can keep thinking of his money as belonging to God, then he is apt to keep the kingdom of God first.* Thus the stewardship of money was regarded by Jesus as a first test of stewardship. Jesus said of the unjust

steward, "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust *the true riches?*" (Luke 16. 11.) It was about the same thing as saying, "If you do not keep your money on the altar, how can you be of any use to the Kingdom?"

The peril involved is splendidly stated in these clear-cut words: "When a Christian begins to make money, God gains a fortune or loses a man." It is a sad fact that few passions are stronger than the love of money; and only when this passion is mastered by the love of the Crucified are men ready to be fit stewards of the kingdom of God. This fact hinges on the truth that money is liquid personality, and when one withholds his possessions from God he is withholding himself.

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles. He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?* And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?—Luke 16. 9-12.

MEDITATION

Money talks. It expresses what its possessors actually are. . . . Yes, money talks, and while it is true that it is not on speaking terms with every one, and to many it may only say "Good bye," yet it speaks a various language which reveals the true inwardness of man.—*David McConaughy.*

From lust for gain or greed for gold,
Keep me with high and holy mien,
But if the ships of fortune bring
Some precious cargo clear and clean,
Safeguard me in my stewardship
By glimpses of thy great unseen.

From lust for place or pomp or power,
Save me with pure and passionate pride.

Curb not the hunger of my soul,
 But keep ambition sanctified.
 Safeguard thy steward, Lord, each day,
 By visions of thy higher way.

—R. S. C.

A PRAYER

O Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor, we pray thee to protect them that are rich in this world, that they may not be high-minded nor trust in the uncertain riches, but in thee, the living God, who givest us richly all things to enjoy. Grant them grace so to use their wealth that they may do good, and be rich in good works, ready to distribute, and willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time coming, that they may lay hold on eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.—Sursum Corda.

Third Week—Seventh Day

From the newspapers comes this bit of current history: Three shipwrecked men were drifting off the Atlantic coast in an open boat. A United States government mail steamer sped by, signaling the anxious castaways that it could not stop because of speed orders. However, the captain did promise to send rescuers. Hours later, upon the arrival of the mail boat in the New York harbor, the shipwrecked sailors were reported, but the captain and the crew that would not stop to save human life were suspended from the service for failure in duty. The reason given was that no order for speedy delivery of mail *can supersede the fundamental obligation to save human life. Personality is the supreme thing in the universe.* While faithfulness in the “unrighteous mammon” is, according to Jesus, the first test of good stewardship, yet *the final goal is the rescue of persons.* Everything that God made was made for the making of a man, but real manhood can only be made by union with God through Jesus Christ. Accordingly, nothing counts if this final work is forgotten. “Follow me and I will make you *fishers of men*” was the way Jesus put it to the fishermen. Had they been carpenters he would have said, “Follow me and I will make you *builders of men.*” Had they been capital-

ists, he would have cried, "Follow me and I will make you *investors* in men!" But by "men" Jesus meant more than the flesh-and-blood house. Yes, our Lord ministered to men's bodies and to their material needs, but it was all aimed at reaching the soul of the man in order to bring him to "decide for God." This is the end of stewardship. God, through the prophets of old, and at last through his own Son, has been trying to love us unto himself in order that we might love others unto him and the eternal life.

And walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left the nets, and followed him. . . . And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.—Matt. 4. 18-20; 23.

MEDITATION

Oh, for God's sake, and the sake of poor souls, bestir yourselves, and spare no pains that may conduce to their salvation. What cause have we to mourn before the Lord that we have so long neglected this good work! If we had but engaged in it sooner, how many more might have been brought to Christ!

—John Wesley.

O Life, thou art rich, thou art full, thou art free,
 Thou art mine, new each morning returning to me!
 Though the night has been long, with no star in the sky,
 Though its winds those of pain like the sob or the sigh.
 Yet, O Life, how I feel, with the first streaks of day,
 Thou art mine! To know thee—this the prayer that I pray.

To know thee, O Life Giver, 'tis thee that I see,
 In this glory of living which bursts over me;
 To be with thee and in thee, thou life of my life—
 What of pain, or of cloud, or of night, with its strife!
 I am thine, thou art mine—Life! abundant and free
 And forever! O glad contemplation of thee!

—R. S. C.

A PRAYER

Once more the long light breaks across the eastern sky. Once more a new day challenges to "Forward, march with God!" Lead thou me on, O Christ. Hold me so close to thee that in my face and from my lips and in my every deed, my fellow pilgrims too may see thy light and know thy presence near. And so, refreshed in thee, they too may forward march with God. Amen.

OUTLINE—THIRD WEEK. JESUS TEACHING STEWARDSHIP

1. Introductory: The Stewardship Relation.
2. First Day: Investing What Belongs to Another.
3. Second Day: Fellowship of Stewardship.
4. Third Day: "My Brother's Keeper."
5. Fourth Day: Sonship and Stewardship.
6. Fifth Day: The Steward's Future.
7. Sixth Day: Material Stewardship and the Kingdom.
8. Seventh Day: Personality Supreme.

QUESTIONS

1.
 - a. What is peculiar to the stewardship relation?
 - b. How can it be said that Jesus *recoined* the word "steward"?
 - c. How may we know God? Should we be satisfied to know his will alone, or his love, or righteousness, or justice, or mercy, or power?
 - d. What is the first step toward an understanding of Christian stewardship? What is the difference between this step and conversion?
 - e. What does this mean, "The earth is the Lord's"?
 - f. How do you acknowledge that the earth is the Lord's?
 - g. Point out the different shades of meaning of stewardship found in the different words used by Jesus in addressing those who worked with him.
 - h. What word expresses the relation you want to maintain with God?
2.
 - a. List all the values you control without any responsibility to others.
 - b. What happens if you do not invest your talents in any way?
 - c. Is God the chief partner with us when we fail to recognize or acknowledge him in any way?

EXERCISES

1. What words mean nearly the same as "steward"? (manager, trustee, superintendent, supervisor, director, administrator, partner, executor) What are the different shades of meaning?
2. How are you conscious of God—as a "warmth," as a presence, a feeling, an impulse? (Write as clear a statement of the facts concerning your experience with God as you are able to make.)
3. Discuss the statement, "One has a right to do as one likes with one's own."
4. Draw a plan for administering all you control in partnership with God.
5. Discuss what is the essence of patriotism. Can it remain at home?
6. How much do you care for people who die in India for want of food, medicine, and instruction? (Write your answer.)
7. What difference does the "gospel" make in our relation to the law?
8. Point out the ways in which the prodigal son is a type of all those who refuse to be Christian stewards.
9. What do you mean by "being saved"? (Write this answer for future reference.)
10. Outline this chapter, reducing the main point of each day's study to a sentence.

CHAPTER IV

Stewardship and Service

INTRODUCTORY

It has been said in a previous chapter that *"stewardship" rather than "service" is God's word for this hour*. Indeed, "stewardship" has been God's ultimate word for every generation. The world has been slow to receive this truth; but at the present time, when pagan nations are developing with almost frightening rapidity, nothing but a sense of stewardship on the part of the stronger for the weaker nations, and on the part of the church for the unevangelized millions, can meet God's call. Mere service, as the word is generally used, is utterly inadequate.

There is a vital difference between stewardship and service. This difference is suggested by the words of the young chaplain who came back to America, declaring, "I am going to live for Jesus Christ, hereafter!" When asked if he had not previously been serving Jesus Christ, he replied, "Yes, I have given Jesus Christ some service in a way, but now I am going to give him my life." Going back many centuries, there is a somewhat parallel case: Queen Esther doubtless did more or less commendable deeds of kindness to her oppressed people, but the real test came when her kinsman challenged her with the statement, "Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" In the hour of emergency it became clear as day to the queen that she could render no service to her people unless she was ready to surrender her whole life as the steward of God.

The same thing developed in America during the World War. In the earlier period multitudes showed their benevolent spirit by doing more or less service for some patriotic organization, but how few felt that deeper agony which a contemporary novelist put into these words: "Miss Katherine Brown walked down the village street to-day in her white

freshness, and behind her in pallid spectral procession those martyred girls of France and Belgium who had suffered worse than death and still were living. I saw their eyes with youth dead in them." But events culminated, and gradually the truth dawned that something deeper than *benevolence* was demanded of the American people. A Western poet, Theresa Virginia Beard, voiced the growing feeling that America had a stewardship intrusted to her:

"God spare thee not, America,
This penitential day,
Against the wall in Flanders
The nations stand at bay;
And you, the strong, the mighty,
A laggard in the fray!"

And at last the majority of Americans came to the realization of duty; our boys enlisted as soldiers, our girls gave themselves as nurses, business men offered their services to the government for a "dollar a year." All over the nation men and women *forgot themselves* and their own interests in the presence of a commanding task. *This was not service—it was stewardship.* It was not a side issue; it was, for the hour, the reason for existence.

To say that "stewardship" is God's word for the twentieth century is by no means to discount the importance of service. Rather it is to rescue the word from the commercial environment into which it has fallen. "Quick Service," "R— Road Service," "Service is the Big Thing," "Dependable Service," "Service Right to the Minute," "Service at Cost," are a few of the hundreds of advertisements which greet the traveler in every part of the country, suggesting that service has come to mean something that you pay for; or, to turn the thought around, a man gives his service, expecting to receive something in return. Thus it becomes more and more necessary in a commercial age to discover what is *the* service that is exhorted in the Scriptures *for love's sweet sake as pleasing unto the Lord.*

"Saved to serve" is an expression that should and will live, but it needs interpretation. We are saved to be fellow workers with God as trusted stewards, and the *good* steward is ever on the alert to do service in his Master's name.

Repeat the words, "In his Master's name," for the phrase helps to distinguish between a so-called type of philanthropist and the Christian steward. Out in California is a great red-wood tree towering majestically up into the heavens *to the glory of God*, who through many centuries has fed it and loved it. And yet some human authority has dared to appropriate that glorious handiwork of the Almighty and has engraved on it, "Dedicated to the Memory of ——." Just so numerous men and women, both in and out of the Kingdom, *in their own name* and *to their own glory* are making gifts, more or less generous, of money and service, all of which ought to be dedicated to the glory of Him who out of his boundless resources has given us all these things. Thus, while there are many differences between the ordinary "service" and "stewardship," the outstanding distinction of the Christian steward is that whatever he gives of service or money it is all done *in the name of his Lord*. The illustrations of the practical working of this principle are numerous. The life of the late William E. Dodge, of New York, is cited here, partly because of this excellent characterization of the man given at his death by one who knew him well: "His wealth was a sacred trust; he was but the steward to administer it, and the more that was poured into his lap, the greater were his obligations. There was no plainer duty, as there was no higher joy than to bestow upon others some portion of that which the Great Giver and Benefactor had bestowed upon him. With such a principle once settled in his mind and formed into habit, it was no effort for him to give away money. It did not cost him a struggle with conscience every time he was asked to contribute to some good cause. On the contrary, it was a pleasure to give. He sought for opportunities."

In concluding this introductory, it is of the greatest importance to see that stewardship as the basis of any service, acceptable to God, must be insisted upon if we are to maintain that important scriptural doctrine that salvation is by faith alone. Evidently, no man can pay his way into the kingdom of God by any service he can render if Jesus' declaration is to be accepted. On a certain occasion he said, "When ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants" (Luke 17. 10).

Said the apostle Paul, "By the works of the law shall no

flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. 3. 20). It is easy to see where the hymn writer found authority to sing,

"In my hand no price I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling."

It is only that person, who has deceived himself into thinking that he has any wealth of money or service that he can *give* God, who fails to see the matchless glory and comfort of such hymns as these. Only such could go on to sing:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come—I come."

The fundamental principle of stewardship is that God, by creation and redemption, is the actual owner of all material and spiritual resources. What has a man to give God? Nothing but a surrendered will and the loving obedience of the good steward. Is it not apparent that there can be no "service" pleasing to God which is not the expression or confession of stewardship?

DAILY READINGS

Fourth Week—First Day

Stewardship is service regarded *not as an avocation but as the main business of life*. William E. Sweet, in his little volume, *The Business Man and His Overflow*, after complimenting the conduct of the American business man during the World War, sounds this alarm: "One of the by-products of the War has been the cultivation of habits of thrift and economy; but a still greater by-product is the instilling of the spirit of generosity. Men have been led through patriotic appeals to give more largely than they ever before thought possible. They have experienced the satisfaction which comes from generous and unselfish acts that are expressed in service or money. *Now that the war is over, will these men in whom this new impulse has been born, fall back into their former narrow round of family and business interest, or will they welcome additional opportunities for usefulness and generous service?*" What is the real question in this quota-

tion? May it not be put in some such words as these: "When do men see most clearly—in time of peace or in time of war?" "When do men give the truest answer to the eternal question, 'What is the main business of living'?" How different would be the world if men and nations would hold in times of peace the same high sense of stewardship which rises to the surface in times of stress! When Edith Cavell wrote, "Patriotism is not enough," she sounded the most patriotic note of all her life. Only that patriotism which is builded on the consciousness of a divine stewardship is sufficient in the hours of emergency, which are most frequently the hours of peace.

"What was the matter back there?" inquired a passenger on the Illinois Central to his friend, the conductor.

"Oh, I was doing a little of the Master's business," replied the conductor. "That woman whose face you do not like was trying to select a boarding place for those girls who are going into the city to work for the first time. I told them that my wife would be at the station and they could stay with us to-night and until they found the right kind of a place."

"That is a fine thing for you to do!" exclaimed the passenger, "and rather exceptional for a man in your busy life."

The passenger has recorded that the conductor replied: "That is my business. I feel that I am not only responsible to the Illinois Central for the comfort of my passengers, but I have a certain responsibility to Jesus Christ for their souls. My business is to serve Jesus Christ. I am working for the Illinois Central to cover expenses."

After all is said, is there any difference in the vocations of the men who are really Christian? In to-day's Scripture Paul is speaking as a layman. He would have been clearly justified in claiming support from the church at Ephesus while he preached to them the gospel, but peculiar circumstances made it advisable for him to stand as a layman among laymen. He made tents for a living, but there was no question about his main business.

Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. . . . Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears. . . . I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Ye yourselves know

that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.—Acts 20. 28, 31, 33-35.

MEDITATION

Do not pray for easy lives! Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers! Pray for powers equal to your tasks! Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle. But you shall be a miracle. Every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of life which has come in you by the grace of God.—*Phillips Brooks.*

“Rest is not quitting
The busy career;
Rest is the fitting
Of self to its sphere.

‘Tis loving and serving
The highest and best:
‘Tis onward, unswerving—
And that is true rest!”

—*John Sullivan Dwight.*

A PRAYER

Eternal God, who committest to us the swift and solemn trust of life; since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving thee is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of thy holy will; not waiting for to-morrow, but yielding to-day. Lay to rest by the persuasion of thy Spirit, the resistance of our passion, indolence or fear. Consecrate with thy presence the way our feet may go; in all things draw us to the mind of Christ, that thy lost image may be traced again, and thou mayst own us as at one with him and thee. Amen.—James Martineau.

Fourth Week—Second Day

Just because the fulfillment of stewardship is the main business of life *Jesus demands that service shall be heroic enough not to falter at any cost.* Just as David refused to render

unto the Lord that which cost *him* nothing, so the Christian steward will refused to classify charity balls, "benefit" parties and the like, as *service* to the King. The woman who replied, "Oh, I really cannot be tied down to a Sunday-school class," and the well-groomed man who tries to "tip" God with a dime or maybe a quarter on Sundays, have a good deal in common with the so-called charitable person who does a little "service" for humanity without making any appreciable inroad on his income. None of these know that service which has its source in Jesus' philosophy of Christian stewardship.

"Lord, let me not be too content
With life in *trifling* service spent."

Dr. Hyde well says: "Mere altruism is often weakly kind, making others feebly dependent on our benefactions instead of sturdily self-supporting. . . . And even fostering a subtle egotism in ourselves as the result of the fatal habit of doing the easy, kind thing, rather than the hard, severe thing that is needed to lift to the highest attainment."

During the Great War a certain mother in Michigan found it easy and natural to do some service, along with other women, for the Red Cross, and the like. But one day her own boy came to obtain consent to enlist in the army. Then came the struggle of her life. The battle was only won after a long night of agony in prayer. In the morning she said, "God showed me that unless I could surrender all that I have to my country, never again could I look up at the flag of my fathers and sing with honesty,

"My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty. . . ."

That mother, with thousands of others, learned the difference between a little service, given with more or less inconvenience to self, and the deeper consecration and sacrifice that Jesus demands.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he

shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds.—Matt. 16. 24-27.

MEDITATION

The practical weakness of the vast mass of modern pity for the poor and the oppressed is precisely that it is merely pity: the pity is pitiful, but not respectful. Men feel that the cruelty to the poor is a kind of cruelty to animals. They never feel that it is injustice to equals—nay, it is treachery to comrades.

—G. K. Chesterton.

“At length when the war’s at an end,
And we are just ourselves, you and I,
And we gather our lives up to mend,
We, who’ve learned how to live and to die;
Shall we think of the old ambition,
For riches or how to grow wise,
When, like Lazarus freshly arisen,
We’ve the presence of death in our eyes?”

—Eric Dawson.

A PRAYER

Blessed Lord, who wast tempted in all things like as we are, have mercy upon our frailty. Out of weakness give us strength. Grant to us thy fear, that we may fear thee only. Support us in time of temptation. Embolden us in the time of danger. Help us to do thy work with good courage, and to continue thy faithful soldiers and servants unto our life’s end; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.—Bishop B. F. Westcott.

Fourth Week—Third Day

Jesus’ philosophy of stewardship lifts service to a new level by making it consequent upon the right attitude toward God. It makes all the difference in whose name service is rendered. Jesus himself was most careful to give glory to the name of the Father; and numerous are his warnings to his disciples to ask and do “in my name.” The honor and glory belongs to God, for “Thou hast made us and not we

ourselves." The disciple must never forget that he serves for his Lord. On this Jesus insisted: 'And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward' (Matt. 10. 42). Paul likewise emphasizes that the service of the Christian steward must be superior to that of the mere philanthropist, for *he is not representing himself*, and for the very good reason that whatever he gives has first been given to him *in trust*.

Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful, . . . but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God. . . . For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?—1 Cor. 4. 1-2, 4, 5, 7.

MEDITATION

Then there is the danger of the high cost of life that we are spending so lavishly, largely in the effort to finance the Kingdom task without the tithe. . . . The ministry to-day is nervously overwrought through the ceaseless effort to extract money without pain from folks who are not stewards of their wealth.—*William H. Phelps*.

There is nothing so small but that we honor God by asking his guidance of it, or insult him by taking it into our own hands.—*John Ruskin*.

A cricket's chirrup,
A tender sky,
Night is on coming
And day must die.

A twilight hush,
An evening star,
Gloomy the night;
But God is not far!

A blaze in the east,
A burnished sky,
God on the hilltop;
Day cannot die.

—R. S. C.

A PRAYER

Teach us, good Lord, to serve thee as thou deservest; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do thy will; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.—Ignatius de Loyola.

Fourth Week—Fourth Day

Moreover, stewardship lifts service to a new level by properly relating it to Jesus Christ. Or it might be said that *Christian stewardship is service plus the right motive*. "Isn't that little boy too heavy for you to carry?" said the passer-by to a little girl who was bending backward under her burden. "Oh, no," came the answer, "for he is my brother." The incident is suggestive of the loving gratitude that a disciple has to Christ, and that is the greatest motive to service that the world can know.

Dr. Andrew Gillies, in his volume, *The Individualistic Gospel*, reviews the claim that was advanced in certain quarters during the Great War that the American soldier facing death on the battlefield does not need to make a confession of his faith in God in order to be saved, and asks: "Does the act of fighting in a good cause automatically put a man on good terms with God and assure him of salvation in spite of the fact that he has no conscious faith, and regardless of his personal character?" Dr. Gillies answered this question in the negative; and Joyce Kilmer, before he was killed in action in France, refuted the assumption that either soldier or civilian, by service however heroic, could gain Heaven's favor regardless of the right relation to Jesus Christ. As the poet soldier, Joyce Kilmer, cries out, "My shoulders ache beneath my pack," he remembers the march to Calvary, and silences his own pain by replying,

("Lie easier, cross upon His back.")

My rifle hand is stiff and numb,
 (From Thy pierced palm red rivers come!)
 Lord, thou didst suffer more for me
 Than all the hosts of land and sea.
 So let me render back again
 This millionth of thy gift. Amen."

The soldier repudiates any attempt to do service save in the name and in loving gratitude to him who bought us with a great price. Therefore Paul declares that we are owned by the Lord on two counts—*creation and redemption*.

Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body.—1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

And in another letter to the same church Paul goes on with a similar argument, showing that those who have been bought by Christ have no right to live unto themselves.

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again. . . . Wherefore if any man is in Christ, *he is a new creature*: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.—2 Cor. 5. 14, 15, 17.

MEDITATION

"What matters death if freedom be not dead?

No flags are fair, if freedom's flag be furled.

Who fights for freedom goes with joyful tread

To meet the fires of hell against him hurled,

And has for Captain him whose thorn-wreathed head

Smiles from the Cross upon a conquered world."

—Joyce Kilmer.

"If we have whispered truth,

Whisper no longer;

Speak as the tempest does,

Stern and stronger."

—John Greenleaf Whittier.

Jesus Christ is not evolution's finest product or the world's greatest saint, but the world's only Saviour, who atoned on Calvary for man's sin. Salvation is a spiritual rebirth, brought about by conscious repentance and faith, and conversely, by a beneficent work of grace wrought in personality by the Holy Spirit. —*Andrew Gillies.*

A PRAYER

O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst humble thyself to become man, and to be born into the world for our salvation, teach us the grace of humility, root out of our hearts all pride and haughtiness, and so fashion us after thy holy likeness in this world, that in the world to come we may be made like unto thee; for thine own name and mercies' sake. Amen.—Bishop Walsham How.

Fourth Week—Fifth Day

Christian stewardship lifts service above mere pity and generosity by giving it a commanding objective which is nothing short of spiritual regeneration of the individual. Thus stewardship differs from philanthropy and mere service in its fundamental purpose. Stewardship does not serve merely because of spasms of emotion, but because of the profound conviction that the steward is called to reconcile man to God. A modern poet has written with a careless burst of benevolence:

"So many gods, so many creeds,
So many paths that wind and wind,
When just the art of being kind
Is all the sad world needs."

Kindness is indeed the need of the world, but kindness was born out of the heart of God and can only flourish where there is the right attitude toward him. Moreover, kindness that merely ministers to the physical or even moral needs falls short of consummation. This is not simply the conclusion of theorists. Every great crisis in history emphasizes the futility of service that does not point to Jesus Christ. This is the only ultimate explanation of such words as these, spoken a few years ago by Henry Watterson: "The paramount

question underlying the issue of democracy is the religion of Jesus Christ. Eliminate Christ and you leave the earth to eternal war." The apostle Paul in to-day's Scripture lesson is actually in the business of the reconstruction of nations as he seeks to bring individuals into personal reconciliation with God.

But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin he made *to be* sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him.—2 Cor. 5. 18-21.

MEDITATION

"You asked me how I gave my heart to Christ?

I do not know.

There came a yearning for him in my soul,

So long ago.

I found earth's flowers would fade and die,

I wept for something that could satisfy;

And then—and then—somehow I seemed to dare

To lift my broken heart to him in prayer.

I do not know—

I cannot tell you how;

I only know

He is my Saviour now."

—Unknown.

We might as well make an experiment with the teachings of Jesus Christ, as almost everything else has been tried and failed. I am no more a Christian than Pilate was; and yet I am ready to admit that after contemplating the world of human nature for nearly sixty years I see no way out of the world's misery but the way of Christ's will.—*George Bernard Shaw*.

A PRAYER

Blessed Lord Jesus, who hast said that except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, purify our

hearts, we beseech thee, that, having been redeemed by thy most precious blood, we may know indeed the changed heart and the transfigured life. Give to us, we pray thee, such conviction of thy power to bring light out of darkness, joy out of despair, and victory out of defeat; and of thy eternal readiness so to transform all who will truly abandon themselves unto thee, that, trusting in thy Holy Spirit, we may this day and always be living evangelists of thy power to save. Amen.

Fourth Week—Sixth Day

"Tired! well, what of that? Didst fancy life was spent on
beds of ease,
Fluttering the rose leaves scattered by the breeze?
Come! Rouse thee, work while it's called to-day!
Onward, arise—go forth upon the way!"

Stewardship lifts service into a high atmosphere of eternal duty, safe from these softening influences of convenience and self-indulgence. It is true that the steward will see ecstatic moments when the severest crosses will be easily carried on a flood of divine emotion, but ordinarily it is not so. Stern duty must be marshaled to bear us on. During those first days of being swallowed up in the jungles of Africa Dan Crawford tells us how he all but lost his song. At length in a burst of heroism he cried, "My heart is fixed, O God; I will sing!"

Perhaps the richest heritage that the Antarctic explorer, Captain Scott, has left to his posterity, is those noble words that he wrote in his diary in that last terrible day. About to die, he declared to the world that no circumstances, however dire, can warrant a forgetting of our moral and spiritual responsibility to God. When he and his men had apparently reached the limit of endurance, and it had become certain that death would soon claim them all, at first the chief surgeon was ordered to give to each man thirty opium tablets to be used at the discretion of each unfortunate man; but with a heroism almost impossible to imagine, the decision to employ the easy method of death was revoked, and the diary reads: "*We must be near the end. I have decided it shall be natural. We shall march for the depot with or without our effects and die in our tracks!*" This is the same spirit that Paul portrays

in to-day's Scripture: Whether I face my work eagerly or shrinkingly, nevertheless I have a stewardship intrusted to me, and I must and will be true.

For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward: but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me.—1 Cor. 9. 16, 17.

But in the heart of the apostle's life there is revealed the secret of his devotion to his task. It takes more than a shipwreck to shake his great confidence that he belongs to God:

And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Cæsar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me.—Acts 27. 22-25.

MEDITATION

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do that day which must be done, whether you like it or not. Being forced to work and forced to do your best will breed in you temperance, self-control, diligence, strength of will, content, and a hundred virtues which the idle will never know.—*Charles Kingsley*.

Out of the shame of my coward heart,
Out of my night of defeat,
Lift me, O God, to the battle again,
Cover my bitter retreat.

Out of despising my weakness and rout,
Out of the love of thy soul,
Purge me, O purge, with thy hyssop, dear Christ,
Give me my spirit made whole.

.

Beaten, but still undefeated, I pray,
Thou of unconquerable hand,
Reach me my poor broken sabre again,
I pledge thee to die or to stand!

—R. S. C.

A PRAYER

O Lord God, give me the desire to be persistent in service while I have the health and strength. May I experience the sweetness that comes in doing the thing that I ought to have done as well as that in which I took most pleasure. Help me so to live that my days may be thy days, through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.—Margaret Bird Steinmetz.

Fourth Week—Seventh Day

Stewardship is *an invitation to friendship with God*. While it is doubtless true that many stewards never rise above the legal relation of a servant to his master, nevertheless it is the desire of the Lord that all be promoted into that higher loving relationship where he may cherish them as "friends." It took Jesus a long time to bring his disciples into even such partial sympathy with his program that he can say as he does in to-day's Scripture, "No longer do I call you servants; . . . but I have called you friends." Notice that Jesus indicates that *the difference between the higher and the lower grade of stewardship lies in not knowing "what his Lord doeth."* In other words, that closer friendship with the Lord grows in proportion as we share with him his passion to redeem *all people in all the world*.

"Why, the idea of Edna wanting to be a missionary!" was the calloused exclamation of a New England church woman whose daughter had returned from the Silver Bay summer conference to announce to her parents the new conviction of her life. "We can give Edna anything she wants. She can go to school anywhere. She can travel around the world if she wants to; but this idea of a daughter of mine being a missionary! Let some girl go to China who does not have all these things." What can be said to a professing Christian of this kind whose mind and soul reveals so little sensitiveness to the great business of Christ? The sad fact is that this mother is not alone either in her selfishness or in her ignorance of the friendship of Jesus Christ. The failure of many very "good" church members to get much joy out of their religion is the result of holding Jesus at a distance through unreadiness to sympathize with this world program. "Lo, I am with you always" is the assurance of the Great Friend,

but the promise is conditioned upon our acceptance of the Great Commission.

Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you. No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you. Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.—John 15. 14-16.

Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.—Matt. 28. 19, 20.

MEDITATION

So long as we love, we serve; so long as we are loved by others, I would almost say that we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend.—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

“What care I for robe or stole?
It is the soul, it is the soul;
What for crown, or what for crest?
It is the heart within the breast;
It is the faith, it is the hope,
It is the struggle up the slope;
It is the brain and eye to see
One God and one humanity.”

—*Robert Loveman.*

A PRAYER

O Lord, renew our spirits and draw our hearts unto thyself, that our work may not be to us a burden, but a delight; and give us such a mighty love to thee as may sweeten all our obedience. Oh, let us not serve thee with the spirit of bondage as slaves, but with the cheerfulness and gladness of children, delighting ourselves in thee, and rejoicing in thy work. Amen.—Benjamin Jenks.

OUTLINE—FOURTH WEEK. STEWARDSHIP AND SERVICE

1. Introductory: God's Message—Stewardship.
2. First Day: The Business of Life.
3. Second Day: Heroic Service.
4. Third Day: Right Relation to God.
5. Fourth Day: Right Attitude Toward Jesus.
6. Fifth Day: Spiritual Regeneration.
7. Sixth Day: Eternal Duty.
8. Seventh Day: A Friendly Invitation.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* What is the difference between stewardship and service?
b. Can there be Christian stewardship without sacrifice?
What is sacrifice?
c. What is the divine deposit in us that cannot be touched by catastrophe?
d. Should service be sold for a price? given for love? or how rendered?
e. What is the Christian steward's idea of being saved?
f. Why do we find the utmost reward when we "seek first the Kingdom"?
g. Is the lack of joy in our work an evidence of virtue? of maladjustment? Should we work with God for "the fun of it"? for duty's sake? for profit? for self-chastisement?
h. How reconcile the scriptural teaching that salvation is by faith with Christ's insistence upon faithful stewardship?
i. What can you give God?
2. *a.* What part of life may we omit from stewardship, and remain Christian?
b. How does a personal relation determine action, whether we be at peace or at war?

- c. Isn't it morbid and objectionable to be always responsible for everybody?
3. a. What are the Christian opportunities for heroism?
b. Is there any such thing as an "easy-going Christian life"?
4. a. What difference do motive and vision make in the results of our work?
b. Why should the Christian's work be done in a superior manner?
5. a. In what ways may we confess that we are God's children?
b. Does the act of fighting in a good cause automatically put a man on good terms with God?
c. How are love and service related? May they be separated?
6. a. What is the personal transformation known as the "new birth"?
b. Among virtues, what rank would you give to kindness?
c. What is the first thing to do in order to become a Christian steward?
7. a. How may we know the joy of the Lord, and find in it our strength?
b. Where lies our greatest pleasure; in duty, partnership, independent action?
8. a. What is the highest relation possible between persons?
b. Why do not comforts and other "things" satisfy? What does?

EXERCISES

1. Write out the difference between stewardship and service; your own opinion in your own words. Establish the true relation between stewardship and service.
2. How would you explain the statement that "Christ came in order to bring to heaven a few saved souls is the negation of all true religion"?
3. For whom are we responsible and in what measure?
4. How does the law of use apply to life?
5. Consider various plans for escaping human misery, and compare with the plan of Jesus Christ—Capitalism, Communism, Christian Science, Newer Thought, Individual-

ism, Agnosticism, Unitarianism, Mormonism, Bahaism, Pessimism, Optimism, Syndicalism, Socialism, Autocracy, Tyranny, Democracy, Bolshevism, Epicureanism, Zionism.

6. Make outline of the argument of the chapter.

CHAPTER V

Pentecost and Stewardship

INTRODUCTORY

PENTECOST introduces a new and victorious chapter in the story of the human stewardship. God's sovereign ownership, a great vision of his unswerving purpose to make a new world of regenerated man, an intense consciousness of a lofty mission to be fellow workers with Christ, a deep abhorrence of sin, a burning sense of brotherhood, a heavenly feeling of joyous comradeship with God, a high indifference to pain or poverty, or persecution, and an inner assurance of *power* to meet every demand and to make certain the final victory—these were some of the net results of the day of Pentecost.

These results are best seen in their contrasts. The man who remarked, "These Christians are the most unromantic of people," had never read the romance of the early church as told in the Acts of the Apostles. Elliott E. Mills, in his splendid lines, has suggested both the romance and the contrast:

"O pale faced Theologian, whose soft hands
And ink-stained fingers never grasped the oar
Or swung the hammer; weary with your books,
How can your slumbering senses comprehend
The breadth and virile purpose of the men
Who bore their joyous tale through quickened lands
To the great heart of Rome; the shipwrecked Paul,
Wandering Ulysses-like to far-off isles
And barbarous peoples; or those peasant kings,
Who ever 'mid voluptuous cities move
No mediæval halo, but the air
Of some free fisher battling with the wind
That blows across the Galilæan hills?"

It is evident that the "shipwrecked Paul, wandering Ulysses-like to far-off isles," is a different man from the Saul who went everywhere persecuting the churches; nor is the Peter

of Pentecost the same who formerly followed Jesus afar off. *What has happened?* Plainly this, that *God has come to the climactic act in his own voluntary stewardship*. From the beginning all of his divine resources had been dedicated to the welfare of his creatures. His dominating passion had been expressed in his words, "Let us make man *in our image*,¹ after our likeness." It was an eternal undertaking. God called man to share with him this stewardship. Then the fight began. Robert Browning sums it up with:

"No, when the fight begins within himself,
A man's worth something: God stoops o'er his head,
Satan looks up between his feet—both tug—
He's left, himself, i' the middle; the soul wakes
And grows. Prolong that battle through his life!"

But man's stewardship was not only to build manhood within himself, but likewise to build it in the great world of other men. A perfect world of perfect men was God's goal. Slowly but surely through the long centuries, the vision had grown clear. The patriarch, the prophet and, last of all, Christ himself proclaiming the program. The disciples saw it vaguely, but even the little that they understood brought terror to their hearts. How could the disciples of a crucified Lord conquer the world? Easter morning helped to clear their minds and to strengthen their faith. But even then that walk, back from the hill, from which their Lord had gone from them into the clouds, to that upper room where they were to "tarry" for future orders, was more of a funeral procession than the march of soldiers. *What they needed was a still clearer conception of their task, and especially some heavenly power to energize them for their great commission. And Pentecost was God's answer.* They were filled with the Holy Ghost. Henceforth they were imitators of God in the dedication of self and substance for the regeneration of the world, and in their lives God reigned supreme.

"Holy Spirit, all divine,
Dwell within this heart of mine;
Cast down every idol-throne,
Reign supreme, and reign alone."

¹Not italic in original.

In just *what particulars* the Holy Spirit deepened the stewardship conviction of the disciples will be indicated in the "Daily Readings," but we ought first to raise an important question: If the coming of the Holy Spirit deepened and empowered the sense of stewardship in the early church, *may it not be true that the shallowness of stewardship conviction in the church of to-day is due to the failure of professing Christians to obey the Lord's commandment to "tarry" and be filled with the Spirit?* This seems to be the conclusion of Dr. J. H. Jowett: "I am deeply persuaded that, judged experimentally by our daily life and practice, much of the mental attitude and spiritual pose of the modern church is pre-Pentecostal, and that in this thin and immature relationship is to be found the secret of our common weariness and impotence."

It will help to further understand the condition of many a modern church and present-day disciple, if one will make the comparison with that ancient church of Ephesus where a small membership was attempting to "carry on" without the leadership or the power of the Holy Spirit. It was a glad day when the spiritual diagnostician arrived in the person of the apostle Paul, who promptly sized up the situation and asked, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" Dr. Jowett further comments: "Why did he put the anxious question? were there some ominous signs of impoverishment which aroused this painful wonder? Did he miss something? . . . Perhaps it was the large care-lines plowed so deeply upon their faces. Perhaps it was a certain stale flatness in their intercourse. Perhaps it was a look of defeat in their tired eyes—the expression of exhausted reserves, the lack of exuberance, the want of a swinging and jubilant optimism. Perhaps it was the absence of the bird-note from their religious life. I know not what the signs may have been, but some conspicuous gap yawned before the apostle's penetrating vision, which prompted him to ask this trembling, searching question, 'Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?' and the half-spirited and wearied souls replied, 'Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given!' How imperfect their equipment! How inadequate their resources! . . . The day of Pentecost had come; the marvelous promises had been fulfilled; the wonder-ministry had begun; but these disciples were still in the pre-Pentecost days; they were behind the spiritual times!"

But what of the present hour? Need we go back to the Ephesians for examples of powerless churches and powerless disciples? A few years ago Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus wrote: "The most incongruous, if not ridiculous, sight in this practical world is a fine machine standing in its polished beauty, but lacking just the one thing that gives it motive power or even permits motion. . . . The instant and commanding thing to be accomplished in the life of Christian people to-day—and if I could have my way, this would be what I would see achieved in every soul—is the experienced presence of God as the Holy Spirit. It is Pentecost which the church needs at once and forever."

DAILY READINGS

Fifth Week—First Day

"Into this Universe, and Why not knowing
Nor Whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not Whither, willy-nilly blowing."

This fatalism of Fitzgerald's pagan poet is as far removed from the conviction that filled the hearts of the disciples at Pentecost as the East is from the West. The men who preached that day in Jerusalem knew why they were in the world and what they had come to do. In the first place, *Pentecost deepened the stewardship conviction of the disciples by bringing to their remembrance what Jesus had told them concerning their mission and his gospel.* During the long months the great Teacher had patiently worked with his disciples, continuously instructing them in the face of small encouragement, but confidently waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, when all the dormant seed which he had sown would come to life and fruition under the miraculous influence of the Spirit of God. The confidence of Jesus that such would be the case is seen in these words spoken shortly before his death indicating the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of men.

These things have I spoken unto you, while yet abiding with you. But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit,

whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.—John 14. 25, 26.

A vivid instance of the actual working of the Holy Spirit on the human mind is found in Peter's report of his experience among the new Gentile converts at Cæsarea, bringing a solemn sense of the fellowship with God in his great mission:

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit. If then God gave unto them the like gift as *he did* also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?—Acts 11. 15-17.

MEDITATION

"I worship thee, O Holy Ghost,
I love to worship thee;
My risen Lord for aye were lost
But for thy company.

"I worship thee, O Holy Ghost,
I love to worship thee;
With thee each day is Pentecost,
Each night Nativity."

—William F. Warren.

The missionary enterprise waits for the day when the Holy Spirit shall pervade and dominate the Church of Christ, and the Holy Spirit waits for the day when the church shall be willing.—Robert E. Speer.

A PRAYER

O Thou, who hast promised that when the enemy sweeps in like a flood thou wilt lift the barrier of thy Spirit against him, have mercy upon us and deliver us from ourselves. In the hour of unusual weakness be thou our unusual strength. When the consciousness of repeated failure drives us toward the slough of discouragement and despair, be thou our hope. As confidence in self decreases, suffer us not to be overwhelmed save by the wideness of thy mercy and the promise

of thy power. Forgive us the multitude of our transgressions, but help us that we may not presume upon thy mercy. O thou Abounding Love, save us both from lying defeated amidst our failures or from presuming to shift to thy shoulder the crosses we should bear. Gird us once more to the battle. Give power once again to our broken swords. Renew the battle song within our hearts, hold steadfastly before us thy vision of the heights, and give us this day the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Fifth Week—Second Day

Pentecost deepened the stewardship conviction in the disciples by *fixing the consciousness that they were God's personal agents in the fulfillment of his ancient purposes* as first indicated by the patriarchs and prophets. It was a great moment in Queen Esther's life when her kinsman flung the challenge to her, "Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Said a young woman just returned from a student conference, "Mother, I have realized for the first time in my life that God has something for me to do in his kingdom." It should be noted again and again that there are two reasons for the responsibility which the disciples of Christ must feel. Not only is there a heaven-given task for each one of us, but our responsibility is the more sobering because great souls in the past have labored before us. There is a *fellowship of stewardship*. A "cloud of witnesses" are looking on to see how we write our chapter of the story of the working out of the eternal program that God first gave to them. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," said Peter in explanation of the happenings of Pentecost. The disciples were merely in the succession of the endless procession of the stewards of God. It gave them not only new courage but a deepening feeling of responsibility. Said a small hero, "If I do that, I cannot look my father in the face." We of this generation not only have to answer to the Great Father, but we have also to look in the face the long procession of God's heroes who have kept the faith.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of

Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day; but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel:

And it shall be in the last days, saith God,

I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh:.

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

And your young men shall see visions,

And your old men shall dream dreams:

Yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days

Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. . . .

And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.—Acts 2. 14-18, 21.

MEDITATION

I regard the Pentecost at Jerusalem as the type and prophecy of Pentecost all through the history of the Church of God. . . . So in this sense we are justified in looking for other Pentecosts in history that shall not only be like the first Pentecost at Jerusalem but greater than that in results as that was greater in results than any work of the Spirit that went before.—*Arthur T. Pierson.*

“While kings of eternal evil

Yet darken the hills about,

Thy part is with broken sabre

To rise on the last redoubt;

To fear not sensible failure,

Nor covet the game at all,

But fighting, fighting, fighting,

Die, driven against the wall.”

—*Louise Imogen Guiney.*

A PRAYER

O Thou in whose hand are the hearts of thy creatures, shed abroad thy peace upon the world. By the might of thy Holy Spirit quench the pride, and anger, and greediness which cause man to strive against man, and people against people. Lead all nations in the ways of mutual help and good will, and hasten the time when the earth shall confess thee indeed for its Saviour and King, and no evil deeds of man shall defile

thy glorious creations; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.—Bishop Wilbur Patterson Thirkield.

Fifth Week—Third Day

Robert Louis Stevenson once declared that "No man can truly say that he has made a success of life unless he has written at the top of his journal, 'Enter God.'" Certainly no man *can make a success of his stewardship without divine power*, and this is another reason why Pentecost is the climactic expression of God's own consciousness of stewardship. Throughout the Old Testament we have seen the unwearied purpose of God to reconstruct a world and regenerate humankind. We have seen his patient attempt through long centuries to call men to share with him his eternal purpose. The light has gradually dawned on the souls of men. Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Nehemiah, Isaiah, Hosea, and hundreds of others shared with him his patience and his passion. In the fullness of time he sent his Son as his supreme appeal. Jesus lived and taught his Father's program; the truest philosophy of life, that of a loving stewardship, blossomed from the lips of the Nazarene. He gathered around him an inner circle of disciples to whom he intrusted his philosophy of life and the task of working out the program of his Father. Then he suffered the supreme agony on the cross while his disappointed disciples were driven, scattered to their homes, to sit in the ashes of their ruined hopes. "We hoped he was he who should redeem Israel," they said. Then on Easter morning came the glad shock of surprise. Christ was risen and they touched his hands and feet, looked into the glorified face, and felt faith rekindling in their souls. Then they received the Great Commission. They were to be the stewards of the gospel of Christ, even as he had been chosen steward of his Father. But how is a mere handful of timid, powerless disciples to carry out such a stupendous commission as the reconstruction of the world? Pentecost was the answer they received.

As they tarried at Jerusalem God made it clear that he did not expect them to work alone. The task was his. They were merely his agents. He was to supply the leadership *and the power*.

And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

. . . And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. . . .—Acts i. 7, 8; 2. 1-4.

MEDITATION

“Challenge thy people, Jehovah of hosts!

Speak as of old at this hour:

Silence alike their complaints and their boasts,

Challenge thy people with power.

“Give them a task that will drain their heart’s blood,

Lead on a wilderness way;

Call them to conquest through fire line and flood,

Challenge thy people to-day.”

—*Jessie Brown Pounds.*

The supreme question of the hour now upon the tongues of tens of thousands of God’s children is, “What is the remedy for the unbelief, spiritual powerlessness, and evangelistic inefficiency of the ministry and membership of the church of our dear Lord?” The divine answer to that question will be found in the fifty-ninth chapter of Isaiah. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.—*William Phillips Hall.*

A PRAYER

O God of all power, who hath called from death the great Pastor of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, comfort and defend the flock which he hath redeemed by the blood of the eternal testament; increase the number of true preachers; mitigate and lighten the hearts of the ignorant; relieve the pains of such as be afflicted, but especially of those that suffer for the testimony of the truth, by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.—John Knox.

Fifth Week—Fourth Day

Pentecost made it clear that *the strategy of the Christian religion lay in winning the individual to renounce sin as the first step to a regenerated life of stewardship.* Without this genuine repentance all the social provisions of the gospel must fail. That great Englishman who lamented upon the death of his friend, "I am sorry for ———; I do not think he will like God very well," reveals a keen understanding of what it means to "go to heaven." It is to "like" God and his program, but one cannot do this without hating all sin and ungodliness. The disciples began their ministry by insisting that the only way to be a good steward is to "repent." To only such is the promise of the Holy Spirit. Says J. H. Mahood: "We need not expect any great nation-wide revival until we begin to preach more as our fathers did concerning the sinfulness of the human heart, the need of repentance, and the absolute necessity for the new birth as a condition for entrance into the kingdom of heaven."

Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter *said* unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.—Acts 2. 36-39.

MEDITATION

If ever I preach again, I will leave out every bit of flourish and preach nothing but present truth, hurl it at the people with all my might, live at high pressure, and direct all my energies to the salvation of souls.—*Spurgeon.*

"I bow my forehead to the dust,
 I veil mine eyes for shame,
 And urge, in trembling self-distrust,
 A prayer without a claim.

.

"I see the wrong that 'round me lies,
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
A world confess its sin.

"No offering of my own I have,
Nor works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gifts he gave,
And plead his love for love."

—John G. Whittier.

A PRAYER

O God, whom none can love except they hate the thing that is evil, and who willedst by thy Son our Saviour to redeem us from all iniquity: Deliver us when we are tempted to look on sin without abhorrence, and let the virtue of his passion come between us and the enemy of our souls; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—David R. Porter.

Fifth Week—Fifth Day

Not only was the stewardship responsibility deepened as a result of Pentecost, but *it was also broadened in that there developed a new social service consciousness.* "I do not want anyone to love my soul if he will not love me," was the way Professor Caleb T. Winchester once expressed the impossibility of a ministry that was not concerned with the everyday environment and physical necessities of man. The Holy Spirit kindled *a compassion that was big enough to minister to every human need*, thus creating a new and profound feeling of human brotherhood. Isaac T. Headland, after telling the story of how a Chinese court physician doctored a court painter, who had gotten a fish bone stuck in his throat, by giving him some medicine to dissolve the bone (which was subsequently removed with no difficulty by a pair of tweezers in the hands of a Christian missionary), declared, "No heathen religion has ever produced a physician who could perform even as simple an operation as that." It seems obvious that *it takes love to stimulate inventiveness.* While necessity may be the mother of invention, it takes love to see the necessity, especially where human welfare is the prime consideration altogether apart from self-interest. Christianity has always

been differentiated from other religions in furnishing the impulse to social betterment. The early church has sometimes been unfairly accused of being "other worldly," but certain it is that in no subsequent age has the church shown a more thoroughgoing power to provide for the total welfare of its members. Thus we have the picture of a church where the passion of stewardship was so strong that one member would be ready to sell his possessions in order to minister to the common need.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.—Acts 2. 44-47.

MEDITATION

Half the world is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting and in being served by others. . . . It consists in giving, and in serving others. He that would be happy, let him remember that there is but one way—it is more blessed, it is more happy, to give than to receive.—*Henry Drummond.*

"High thoughts, and noble in all lands,
Help me; my soul is fed on such,
But Ah, the touch of lips and hands—
The human touch! Warm, vital, close, life's symbols dear,
These need I most, and now, and here."

—*Richard Burton.*

A PRAYER

O Thou who hast founded a church for thyself, and hast promised to dwell in it forever; enlighten and sanctify it, we beseech thee, by thy Word and Spirit; endue all pastors and ministers with thy grace, that they may with joy and assurance guard and feed thy sheep, looking to the great Bishop and Shepherd of souls. Bless all who serve thee in the rule of thy church; in the care of thy poor; in the ministry of thy praise; and in the teaching of the young. Strengthen

them in their labors; give them courage to witness a good confession; and cause thy church to increase more and more, that every knee may bow before thee, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Amen.—Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield.

Fifth Week—Sixth Day

Conspicuous among the results of the Pentecost we must point to *the assurance the disciples came to possess that they were more closely than ever associated with their risen Lord in his redemptive program.* Undoubtedly, one secret of the rapid growth of the early church is to be found in the fact that, though the disciples resisted so largely discussions over questions that surrounded the mystery of their Lord's personality, they steadfastly sought communion with him through the Holy Spirit, who, indeed, seemed to be to them the invisible Jesus himself. He had promised to send the Comforter to them, and in a real sense this new Presence was their unseen but living Lord.

“Speak to Him, thou, for he hears, and Spirit with spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”

It was perfectly natural for Peter, referring to Pentecost with all its wonderful accompaniments, to declare that “Jesus hath poured forth this which ye see and hear” (Acts 2. 33). Moreover, it is perfectly evident that in the holy boldness and miraculous powers of the disciples the people saw the reflection of the life of the Nazarene.

This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,
Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly,

that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. . . .

Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. . . .

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.—Acts 2. 32-36; 4. 13; 13. 52.

MEDITATION

A Japanese woman appeared at the door of one of our mission schools and asked if they took only pretty girls to be educated. The missionary assured her that they took all who came to them. "But," said the woman, "all your girls seem to be pretty." The missionary explained that they were taught soul-culture and that they were Christians. "I do not wish my daughter to become a Christian," said the woman, "but I want to send her to your school to get that look in her face."

—J. W. Mahood.

"If I covet one high grace,
It is this—upon my face
Just to show an inner light
To illumine others' night.

"Give me such a look, so high,
That the saddest passer-by,
On a sudden glad shall say,
'Somewhere shines the sun to-day'!"

—Anna Burnham Bryant.

A PRAYER

O God, Fountain of love, pour thy love into our souls, that we may love those whom thou lovest, with the love that thou givest us, and think and speak of them tenderly, meekly, lovingly; and so loving our brethren and sisters for thy sake, may grow in thy love, and dwelling in love may dwell in thee; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.—E. B. Pusey.

Fifth Week—Seventh Day

Finally Pentecost compelled a broader vision of stewardship by bringing in the dispensation of the personal leadership of the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts of the Apostles

is, in fact, the Acts of the Holy Spirit in directing persons, who are abandoned, soul and body, to his direction. Thus the disciples thought of themselves, not as having a commission to win the world to Christ, *but to serve as surrendered channels through which Christ might win the world to himself*. Thus Mark says in his Gospel, "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed" (Mark 16. 20). How great was their interest to have all understand who it was who was working through them is seen, moreover, in Peter's appeal to the populace after the healing of the cripple at the Temple:

And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this man? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; . . . Acts 3. 12, 13.

Throughout the entire book of the Acts are to be found numerous passages similar to these that follow, indicating the leadership of the Holy Spirit:

And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. . . .

And the Spirit bade me go with them, making no distinction. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house: . . .

And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. . . .

And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not.—Acts 8. 29; 11. 12; 13. 2; 16. 7.

MEDITATION

All experience comes to be but more and more of pressure of his life on ours. I cannot tell you how personal this grows to me—he is here—and I know him. It is no figure of speech. It is the realest thing in the world and every day makes it more real, and one wonders with delight what it will grow to as the years go on.—*Phillips Brooks*.

God is not far,
 Some time, with every one of us, an evening star,
 Or desert's vast expanse, or sunset's hush,
 Or, it may be a child's cry or maiden's love-born blush;
 Or, just as soon, impending battle's deafening roar,
 Though near, though far, throws wide the door
 Where God is found; and in that great, strange hour of holy
 fear
 Is born that sweetest consciousness of all—dear God, that
 thou art near!

—R. S. C.

A PRAYER

O God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst charge thine apostles to preach the gospel to every creature; prosper, we pray thee, all missions of thy church. Send forth laborers into thy vineyard, and bestow upon them all things needful for their work. Grant them wisdom in all difficulties, help in trouble, the sense of thy presence in loneliness, and, if it be thy will, visible success after labor, that thy holy name may be glorified; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.—Guild of Saint Paul.

OUTLINE—FIFTH WEEK. PENTECOST AND STEWARDSHIP

1. Introductory: Power and Vision.
2. First Day: Practical Understanding.
3. Second Day: Personal Association with God.
4. Third Day: The Secret of Success.
5. Fourth Day: Conversion to Righteousness.
6. Fifth Day: Social Consciousness Broadened.
7. Sixth Day: Assurance that Jesus Is the Christ.
8. Seventh Day: Divine Leadership.

QUESTIONS

1.
 - a. What difference does God's presence make in your life?
 - b. Why call the gift of the Holy Spirit God's *climactic* act in fulfilling his own stewardship?
 - c. How much does God care whether you make the most of yourself?
 - d. Why is it my business to build manhood into other men? Isn't it enough to look after myself?
 - e. How does this "heavenly energy" differ from the "dynamite" mentioned at the beginning of these studies?
 - f. How does God make stewardship possible?
 - g. What spiritual reason can you give for material failure of the church?
2.
 - a. How is it possible to have the accumulated material of life usable?
 - b. What qualities make for successful Christian living—faithful stewardship?
 - c. Does God "work for" any who "waiteth for him"?
 - d. Whence comes our weakness? our strength? our temptations? our inspirations?
3.
 - a. What is the highest commendation God ever gives man; by calling him servant, friend, son, etc.?

- b. Are imagination and memory quickened by the presence of the Holy Spirit?
- 4. a. Why is a Christian expected to do the impossible? Is this a reasonable expectation?
b. Are we "free agents," or only soldiers "under orders"?
- 5. a. Define sin, repentance, heaven. Can we "like" God, and dislike people?
b. What is the relation between individual sin and social harmony, or heaven?
- 6. a. Why is it that "no nation rises any higher than its religion"?
b. In what ways do you find Christian love expressing itself?
c. What place has mysticism in the Christian religion?
- 7. a. How may we know that we are reconciled to God?
- 8. a. How does the Holy Spirit lead?
b. What constitutes a call to religious service? Is it confined to church work?

EXERCISES

- 1. Read the record of Pentecost and note the results indicated in the lesson.
- 2. Describe a perfect man; a perfect world; a perfect God.
- 3. Criticize Dr. Jowett's statement concerning "the pre-Pentecostal" conditions of the modern church.
- 4. How does the Holy Spirit give power to the Christian?
- 5. Why does God need personal representatives on earth?
- 6. Why do people resist being "uplifted" by those who "love their souls" but do not love them?
- 7. Gather proof that Christian love has produced the mechanical advancement of the past one hundred years.
- 8. What are "consecration," "full surrender," "sanctification"? How do they differ from stewardship?
- 9. Outline the leading thought in each day's argument.

CHAPTER VI

Stewardship and Prayer

INTRODUCTORY

PREEMINENT among the important results of Pentecost was the new valuation which the disciples placed upon prayer as a stewardship. After those tremendous days which preceded and immediately followed the coming of the Holy Spirit prayer became for the disciples not only a privilege but a necessity. Praying was a vital part of their work. Indeed, it was preliminary to every other task. *To wrestle in prayer was as much a part of faithful stewardship as proclaiming the message or the spending of money for the welfare of a growing congregation.* The poet has said:

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed—
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

But Pentecost taught those early disciples that there could be no fire to tremble in the breast, nor the Kingdom work be accomplished in any sense, unless they were faithful in their ministry of prayer. And it is the same to-day. The lesson of the early church needs to be learned by each new generation.

An old veteran was speaking. He had fought many a battle for God and with him had won some outstanding victories. But there was one source of sorrow, "As I look back over my life," he said, "I regret that I have not spent more time in prayer. I could have accomplished more for the Kingdom." Similar words to these came from another of America's conspicuous ministers not very long ago: "If I could live my life over again, there is one thing I would have different. I do not feel that I would put any more time into my study, or

upon my sermons; I would not give more attention to my pastoral labors, but I would give infinitely more time to prayer. Here is where I have failed." This good man was voicing the confession of many. Out of careful observation Andrew Murray declares, "If the amount of true wrestling with God in the daily life of the average Christian could be disclosed, the wonder might be, not that he accomplishes so little, but that God is willing to use him at all."

It seems evident that the most stupid heresy in the Christian Church has nothing to do with theological controversy. Sadly enough, it has to do with this more vital matter of prayer. In so far as the church of to-day does not share the conviction of the early church that prayer is the first work, just so far are we in danger not only of becoming practical atheists, but also of blocking Christ's program for the evangelization of the world.

It is not necessary to *understand* the mysteries involved to believe that prayer is the first requisite in the world conquest. Indeed, there are deep questions, but Jesus did not consider that it was his business to explain prayer; he commanded it. He instructed his disciples to "tarry at Jerusalem." He told them that authority was given unto him and that he would commit his authority unto them as stewards. *Thus prayer was to be the means by which the disciple was to release the resources and energies of God. Prayer, therefore, became not only a big privilege but a trust, and it is required in stewards that they be found faithful.*

Moreover, Jesus demonstrated in *his daily life* this same need of constant communion with the Father. If Jesus needed to spend whole nights in prayer, how perilous is the failure of the disciples to pray! What does it mean to us that Jesus pointed to the field whitening to the harvest, and commanded, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth laborers into his harvest"? (Matt. 9. 38.) Is it of minor significance that Jesus pointed out prayer as the first requisite? Behold the whitening fields! How it should drive us to our knees to hear Jesus declare that the great God waits for human intercession before thrusting forth workers into the field. Or, consider prayer from another angle—is it some difficult problem that the best of human ingenuity and labor fails to work out? What a terrible responsibility he places on our faithfulness at the mercy seat when he declares, "This

kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer" (Mark 9. 29). And what does Paul mean when he writes, "I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercession, be made"? Surely, we should know. One has answered, "When I shall see Christians all over the world resolved to prove what shall be the efficacy of prayer for the conversion of the world, I shall begin to think that the millennium is at the door." Robert E. Speer concludes, "If fifty men of our generation will enter the Holy Place of prayer and become henceforth men whose hearts God has touched with the prayer passion, the history of the church will be changed." What does all this mean if not that Jesus taught, and Pentecost illuminated his message, *that prayer is and always has been the greatest need of the church and of the world?* Dr. Speer adds: "Deeper than the needs of men; deeper far than the need for money; aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life, is the need of the forgotten prevailing world wide prayer."

If prayer is the great need of the world, why is it so difficult to get men to really pray? This difficulty has been put into these lines by Archbishop R. C. Trench:

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!

"We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all the distant and the near
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!

*"Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
And we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when we in prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage, are with thee?"*

The outstanding sentence is the one italicized: "Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong, or others," that we are not faithful in our stewardship of prayer? Many sincere followers of Christ have shed tears over this question. *The most obvious answer seems to be that we have not educated*

ourselves to think of prayer as a stewardship in which it is required that we be faithful to the end. Bishop Hamilton, of Salisbury, has splendidly emphasized this conviction, "No man is likely to do much good at prayer who does not begin by looking upon it in the light of a work to be prepared for and persevered in with all the earnestness which we bring to bear upon the subjects which are in our opinion most necessary."

The book of Acts furnishes abundant evidence that this was the secret of the successful prayer life of the early Christians. Not only was prayer a blessed communion with their Lord, but it was a necessary part of the work which they were to do in the fulfillment of the great commission. This truth will be made evident in the "Daily Readings."

DAILY READINGS

Sixth Week—First Day

The book of the Acts records a number of crises in the development of the Christian church. Perhaps these were not always apparent to the disciples at the moment, but the student of the Scriptures can clearly recognize their character from the distance. Perhaps the greatest of all these crucial moments was that which crystallized into an immortal statement of *the attitude of the leaders toward prayer*. The necessity of taking care of the members of a rapidly growing church was threatening the very life of the Kingdom. Numerous matters of administration were developing. Naturally, families must be taken care of. A great peril arose that was all the greater because it was unseen. The leaders of the church were in danger of being smothered in the wheels of the machinery, and the church itself was in danger of starting on the road where the major emphasis is placed upon organization, to the neglect of the spiritual resources. We can well wish that the leaders of the church in all generations could have seen as clearly as did those early leaders *who took their stand upon the primacy of the stewardship of prayer*. Accordingly, they refused to be taken from that secret place where God's voice is heard, and where God's resources are made available. They said, "Look ye out . . . seven men, . . . whom we may appoint over this business."

But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word."

Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word.—Acts 6. 1-4.

MEDITATION

Of far greater service than any array of learning or gifts of eloquence, more to be desired than gold and fine raiment, more to be sought than a great name, or apparent opportunities for large usefulness, of deeper significance than high intellectual attainment, or power of popular influence, is this gift—may God give it to each of us!—the secret and sweetness of unceasing, prevailing, triumphant prayer for the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Robert E. Speer.*

"To stretch my hand and touch him,
Though he be far away;
To raise my eyes and see him
Through darkness as through day;
To lift my voice and call him—
This is to pray!

"To feel a hand extended
By One who standeth near;
To view the love that shineth
In eyes serene and clear;
To know that he is calling—
This is to hear!"

—*Samuel W. Duffield.*

A PRAYER

O Lord, my God, what is thy will for me to-day? What task hast thou for me? What opportunity hast thou placed

in my way? Open mine eyes that I may discover thy will! Save me from wasting the new day! May I turn it into eternal profit! Amen.—J. H. Jowett.

Sixth Week—Second Day

In Revelation is given a remarkably vivid, though figurative, portrayal of Heaven's response to the faithful stewardship of prayer on earth. The petitions of earth are pictured as sacredly preserved in the form of incense in the prayer vials of heaven. Moreover, the "incense" of the prayers of the heavenly inhabitants is also added, and when the "vials" become filled they are poured out before the throne of God with the result that fire is cast upon the earth as the signal of answered prayer. These passages in Revelation are worthy of prolonged study. Professor John Alfred Faulkner, of Drew Seminary, has preserved for us a private memorandum made by a missionary pastor on whom this picture of the prayer vials in heaven had made a wonderful impression. The memorandum is a remarkable story of answered prayers. The following is only one of the paragraphs: "I became pastor of a church, and started to get something in the prayer vials. It was a broken-down church, for it had never been broken up. There were ten godly women, but they were reviled, and the church was a by-word. We gave one evening each week to nothing but prayer, and no limit as to time. God saw the measure' which he required, and when the vials of prayer were full he poured them out. We did not have altar services because the whole place was an altar. There were 'voices' on every hand; there was the pouring down of God's convincing Spirit. The whole community was turned upside down, which meant right side up, and I had the joy of receiving many into the assembly. Those tall, strong men were gloriously transformed by the same graces, by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The same thing happened in the other church which I served before going to Africa."

And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. . . .

After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude,

which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; . . .

And when he opened the seventh seal, there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. . . .

And another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel taketh the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake.—Rev. 5. 8; 7. 9; 8. 1, 3, 4, 5.

MEDITATION

One day in Portuguese West Africa in 1914 I was standing by the river and remembering those near and dear to me back home (some of whom had not as yet received Christ). It became an agony to me. "Lord Jesus, does distance make any difference in the measuring of thy promise?" I took off my helmet and looked across the Atlantic and said to the mountains which blocked the minds of my loved ones from Christ, "Be thou removed and cast into the depths of the sea," and prayed in the name of Jesus that he would send his convincing Word in power into the hearts of my beloved brothers and sisters. A few weeks later I got a wonderful letter from my eldest brother, a keen business man, who had graduated from Christianity into Christian Science and then into agnosticism, telling me that he and his wife and children had been brought to Jesus. To-day he is an earnest Christian man influencing many for good. A few weeks later I received letters from two other brothers telling how they and their wives and children had knelt together at the altar and given themselves to Christ. Then I received news that my next younger brother had begun preaching the gospel, and found him a strong, earnest, spiritual preacher, winning souls. My sister and her youngest son had also given their hearts to the Master.—*From a Missionary's Memorandum as reported by Professor John Alfred Faulkner.*

"Stir me, oh! stir me, Lord, I care not how,
 But stir my heart in passion for the world!
 Stir me to give, to go—but most to pray:
 Stir, 'till the blood red banner be unfurled
 O'er lands that still in deepest darkness lie,
 O'er deserts where no cross is lifted high."

—Unknown.

A PRAYER

Blessed Christ, thou who didst promise that thy disciples might remove mountains, increase our faith; and hold us by thy mighty hand until doubts shall cease, and we believe. Teach us to tarry in thy presence until conquered by thy Spirit we too go forth to triumph in thy holy name. Amen.

Sixth Week—Third Day

Dr. Lyman Abbott once said, "It is the minister's business to keep his people up to concert pitch." Indeed, here is indicated an obligation not only upon the minister but upon every Christian steward to keep himself fit to conduct his Master's business. *And only regular communion with God can insure this preparedness. Herein is one of the reasons why Jesus taught prayer as a stewardship, not to be engaged in as a summer pastime, or with occasional spasms of desire, but as a continuous desperate measure necessary to the spiritual health of his disciple.* "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath," and certainly it is a sweet and joyous communion but it is vastly more; it is a communion that imparts a purpose and a strengthening. The psalmist said: "The Lord is my refuge," but he added, "and my strength." The early Christians appreciated the comfort of communion and could have sung with us of to-day,

"There is a place where Jesus sheds
 The oil of gladness on our heads;
 A place than all besides more sweet:
 It is the blood-bought mercy seat."

But a study of the New Testament indicates that in the center of their communion was always to be found the passion of the great commission. Note in the scripture that follows how

these disciples who had been persecuted by the high Jewish court and then released with threatenings, are praying, not for personal protection or heavenly raptures, but to be equipped with new boldness *in order faithfully to serve as witnesses* in the face of the growing opposition. *The disciples sought spiritual health, but primarily for the consummation of their stewardship.*

And being let go, they came to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them. And they, when they heard it, lifted up their voices to God with one accord, and said, O Lord, thou that didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is; who, by the Holy Spirit, *by the mouth of our father David thy servant*, didst say,

Why did the Gentiles rage,

And the peoples imagine vain things?

The kings of the earth set themselves in array,

And the rulers were gathered together,

Against the Lord, and against his Anointed:

for of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel fore-ordained to come to pass. And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, while thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness.—Acts 4. 23-31.

MEDITATION

It has pleased the Lord to teach me a truth, the benefit of which I have not lost, for more than fourteen years. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, or how I might glorify the Lord, but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished. For I might seek to set the truth before the un-

converted, I might seek to benefit believers, I might seek to relieve the distressed, I might in other ways seek to behave myself as it becomes a child of God in this world, and yet, not being happy in the Lord, and not being nourished and strengthened in my inner man day by day, all this might not be attended to in a right spirit.—*Testimony of George Muller.*

Of all the colors I love to see,
The one that stirs to the soul of me
Is the golden green of the maple tree,
When the morning sun looks over the hill
And moves the leaves with a heavenly thrill,
Until transfigured, there it stands,
A holy thing with uplifted hands,
And upturned face so divinely fair
That I know in my heart that God is there,
And I join with the trees in their morning prayer.
—R. S. C.

A PRAYER

Most gracious God, to know and love whose will is righteousness, enlighten our souls with the brightness of thy presence, that we may both know thy will and be enabled to perform it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—Roman Breviary, 1099 A. D.

Sixth Week—Fourth Day

Another reason why prayer is a stewardship *is to be found in the fact that intercession unlocks the door to success in every aspect of stewardship*; the reason being that faithful prayer is a condition to the reception of the Holy Spirit, and apart from his help little or nothing can be accomplished for the Kingdom. For example, there is nothing on earth much sublimer than Christian motherhood, but how dependent is the stewardship of motherhood on prayer! A mother with a large family in a small house was in the habit of declaring that she would "give up" if it were not for the bolt on the inside of the attic storeroom door. She had bought that bolt and she herself had put it on—unknown to anyone. In among the scrap-bags, hanging from the rafters, and the heaps of trunks and boxes, that one soul, pressing its way heavenward,

found its Bethel. Most of the praying of that devoted mother had to be done afoot, or in an ejaculatory manner, but now and then she could retire to that attic room, bolt the world out, and kneel at the Master's feet. Out from that attic room the mother would come, wisting not that her face shone, with a new hope in her heart, and a fresh courage for living and hoping and loving, sacrificing and serving.

Of course the secret was that the mother each day received in that still attic room a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit. Beyond any question the *fundamental reason for the faithfulness of the disciples in their ministry of prayer came out of their discovery at Pentecost that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit was secured only through faithful intercession*. All this is one explanation of that startling truth, "You can do more than pray *after* you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed."

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? . . . Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.—Luke 11. 13; Acts 8. 14-17.

MEDITATION

If thou, then, wouldst have thy soul surcharged with the fire of God, so that those who come nigh to thee shall feel some mysterious influence proceeding from thee, thou must draw nigh to the source of that fire, to the throne of God and of the Lamb, and shut thyself out from the world—that cold world, which so swiftly steals our fire away. Enter into the closet and shut thy door, and there, isolated, "before the throne," await the baptism; then the fire shall fill thee, and when thou comest forth, holy power will attend thee, and thou shalt labor, not in thine own strength, but "with demonstration of the Spirit and with power."—*William Arthur*.

"Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of thy tone;
As thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children, lost and lone.

"O strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the rock, and strong in thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.

"O use me, Lord, use even me
Just as thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, thy joy, thy glory share."

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

A PRAYER

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all, take away from me my sins, and mercifully kindle in me the fire of the Holy Spirit. Take away from me the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, a heart to love and adore thee, a heart to delight in thee, to follow and to enjoy thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.

—Ambrose.

Sixth Week—Fifth Day

It has been indicated that Pentecost brought to remembrance and confirmed the teachings of Jesus concerning prayer as a first necessity in the servant of God. It is probable that public opinion would reflect in a general way this conviction without seeing very deeply the implication involved. For instance, what else is back of this conversation which was overheard between two business men?

"That was a great talk Dr. G—— gave us last night."

"He's a great mixer, isn't he? Whenever I hear him tell stories to a crowd of men, do you know that I am rather proud that he is my minister?"

"And he is no middle-class preacher either."

"But say, John, I've wondered sometimes if a man were dying and wanted someone to pray with him, do you think Dr. G—— would be the first man he'd think of? It seems to me I'd rather send for old Deacon Brown. He isn't much of a mixer, but I think he might have a bigger pull with the

Almighty. He is more like what my mother used to call 'a man of God.'"

Is it not true that underneath this somewhat irreverently stated opinion that a Christian, or at least the "minister," ought to be a man of prayer, *there is the general conviction that the man of prayer can somehow release the divine resources of the heavenly Father?* Indeed, this is what Jesus teaches in the remarkable Scripture story in to-day's study. There is the great harvest field waiting for laborers, and Jesus says to his disciples, "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers." Why should God wait for the prayers of his disciples before sending workers into his long waiting fields? Jesus seems to teach that having appointed man as his responsible agent, the Supreme Person of the Kingdom will not go over his steward's head in working out the moral and spiritual salvation of the world. In his great wisdom he has seen that the surest way to build up manhood in his own "image" is to make the release of his divine powers largely subject to the intercession of his fellow workers. A parallel may be found in the stewardship of money. There can be no doubt that gold is a great factor in the saving of the world. But God has said, "The gold and silver is mine." Then why does he not miraculously turn mountains into money in the face of terrible needs? The answer is perfectly clear: *He has placed all his material resources in the hands of his human stewards, and only as these are faithful can God release his own gold and silver for the building of his Kingdom. Is it difficult, therefore, to think that his spiritual resources are subject to the same general law? The Holy Spirit seems to be limited in his operation according as men are faithful or unfaithful in their stewardship of prayer.* Is not this the reason that Jesus showed less concern about teaching men how to preach than teaching them how to pray?

And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye

therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest.—Matt. 9. 35-38.

MEDITATION

It is worth while making any efforts, however desperate, to learn to pray. . . . Often when I desire to see the Truth come home to any man, I say to myself, "If I have him here, he will spend half an hour with me. Instead, I will spend that half hour in prayer for him."—*Forbes Robinson*.

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those that call them friend?
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

—*Alfred Tennyson*.

A PRAYER

Almighty God, who hast chosen us to share with thee in the distribution of thy bounties, we cry unto thee. Without thy help we can do nothing; without thy Holy Spirit we must betray thy trust. Most Holy God keep us, we pray thee, faithful in our stewardship this day; and, forgiving us our sins, strengthen our purpose to transact all thy business solely to thy glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sixth Week—Sixth Day

Prayer, as the acknowledgment of the human stewardship of God's spiritual resources, is emphasized in the Old Testament as well as the New. All of the prophets were evidently given some realization that they were mediators of divine blessings between the people and the Almighty. As far back as Abraham this responsibility was appreciated. David was a great intercessor; so were Elijah, Hezekiah, and many others. The great statesman, Samuel, is a conspicuous example of one who felt the obligation of prayer. In that critical hour in the history of the Israelitish kingdom, when by the choice of the people themselves he has been retired as their leader

in favor of the new King Saul, Samuel remains faithful to the nation and his people, declaring, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you."

In the Scripture for to-day there is another outstanding illustration of the stewardship of prayer. In describing this scene Dr. William E. Doughty says: "A fierce battle is at its crisis. Far-reaching issues hung on the way the battle went. Intercession was the pivot on which the victory turned. Joshua was leading the battle on the plain; Moses and Aaron and Hur, the intercessors, were in the thick of the battle on the hill alone with God. While intercession continued, victory was assured. When it ceased, the tide turned to defeat. Given a Joshua to lead the battle, a Moses and his helpers in intercession, and no Amalek can prevail. If in our day the church would realize the significance of that scene on the hill as the decisive factor in the conflict on the plain, the shout of victory would reverberate everywhere among the hosts of God."

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book. . . .—Exodus 17-8-14.

MEDITATION

Is intercession with a travail, or is it a playtime, a recreation, the least exacting of all things, an exercise in which there is neither labor nor blood? "The blood is the life." Bloodless intercession is dead. It is only the man whose prayer is a vital expenditure, a sacrifice which holds fellowship with

Calvary, and "fills up that which is behind in the sufferings of Christ."—J. H. Jowett.

"More than half beaten, but fearless,
Facing the storm and the night;
Breathless and reeling, but tearless
Here in the lull of the fight,
I who bow not but before thee,
God the fighting clan,
Lifting my fists I implore thee,
Give me the heart of a man!" —Unknown.

A PRAYER

O God, the might of all them that put their trust in thee, grant that we may be more than conquerors over all that make war upon our souls, and in the end may enter into perfect peace in thy presence; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.
—Roman Breviary.

Sixth Week—Seventh Day

"I have come," said Donald Hankey, before he died, "to see through the eyes of God." So had Bishop James W. Bashford, of China, when faced with the humanly impossible tasks in that great mission field. In describing the emergency to a fellow worker, he said, "I made up my mind that I could not depend on my friends in America, that *I must depend on God alone*. Therefore, I must live closer to God than I had ever done before. I must get into the very heart of God."

The final value of the scriptural teaching of the stewardship of prayer lies in its emphasis upon man's ultimate dependence upon God as the source and creator of the divine resources of the Kingdom. No one really learns this without coming to realize that prayer must be the first business of his life. So it was with Paul. He had seen through the very heart of God; and catching the vision of the Divine program, and feeling the Divine passion for humanity he learned also his utter dependence upon the Divine resources as released in intercession. This is the explanation of the old veteran's exhortation to the young Timothy:

I exhort, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all

men. . . . with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.—1 Tim. 2. 1; Eph. 6. 18.

But the supreme illustration of one who saw "through the eyes of God" and *put prayer as the first work of faithful stewardship* was our Lord himself. Of this example Robert E. Speer says: "There are two things which make our Lord's example in the life of prayer of special significance. In the first place, if ever anyone could have dispensed with prayer, it was he. In the second place, his experience tried out the whole reality of prayer. Whatever he found in it, we may be sure is there."

And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. . . .

And straightway he constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before him unto the other side, till he should send the multitudes away. And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray. . . .

And he was parted from them about a stone's cast; and he kneeled down and prayed.—Mark 1. 35; Matt. 14. 22, 23; Luke 22. 41.

MEDITATION

Allow no rush of work or of pleasure to crowd out time for prayer. Luther once said, "I have much work to do to-day, so I will arise an hour earlier in order to have time for quiet prayer." Those who make a rule of the Morning Watch should resolve never to allow a single exception. When away on vacations, or sleeping in the same room with others, on camping parties when we sleep under the stars, or out in the thick of life's work, cling unshakably to the regular observance of this life-giving habit.—*David R. Porter.*

"Lo! amid the press,

The whirl and hum and pressure of my day,
I hear thy garments sweep, thy seamless dress,
And close beside my work and weariness

Discern thy gracious form, not far away,
But very near, O Lord, to help and bless.

"The busy fingers fly, the eyes may see

Only the glancing needle which they hold,

But all my life is blossoming inwardly,

And every breath is like a litany;

While through each labor, like a thread of gold,

Is woven the sweet consciousness of thee!"

—Susan Coolidge.

A PRAYER

O God our Father, who dost exhort us to pray, and who dost grant what we ask, if only, when we ask, we live a better life; hear me, who am trembling in this darkness, and stretch forth thy hand unto me; hold forth thy light before me; recall me from my wanderings; and, thou being my guide, may I be restored to myself and to thee, through Jesus Christ. Amen.—Saint Augustine.

OUTLINE—SIXTH WEEK. STEWARDSHIP AND PRAYER

1. Introductory: The Place of Prayer.
2. First Day: Prayer in the Primitive Church.
3. Second Day: God's Response to Prayer.
4. Third Day: Regular Stewardship of Prayer.
5. Fourth Day: Unlocking the Doors.
6. Fifth Day: Releasing Personal Power.
7. Sixth Day: Prayer a Duty.
8. Seventh Day: Depending on God.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* What is prayer that its use becomes so imperative?
b. Is the one who does not pray godless?
c. What is the power committed to the friends of Jesus?
d. Why should God wait for men to pray before sending workers?
e. Do you believe the statements by Robert E. Speer concerning the efficacy of prayer? Why?
2. *a.* What is the relative importance of organization and of prayer in your own church?
b. Were the Grecians wrong in calling attention to abuses in the church? Is it wrong now to question the conduct of the church?
3. *a.* May we expect a certain amount of power or virtue for a given amount of praying?
b. What do we mean by "filling the vials of prayer"?
4. *a.* Is prayer a happy privilege, or a desperate remedy for "lost causes"?
b. Who comes first in your care, you, or others, or God?
5. *a.* Is prayer a duty? a service? a condition? an attitude? a conferring? a monologue? a dialogue? worship? magic? ritual? an offering? a safeguard? a "pull"?

6. *a.* What differences have you noticed between those who pray and others who do not?
b. If men believe that prayer releases divine resources, why do they not pray?
c. In what ways are God's administration of spiritual and material powers similar?
d. Discuss the following question asked by a layman of his pastor: "Some people do a lot of praying but little else, and some of us do a lot of work and not much praying—which do you prefer?"
7. *a.* Explain why it is a sin not to pray?
b. What relation is there between prayer and morale—courage, confidence, and fidelity?
8. *a.* Are the prizes, obtainable through merely human help, worthy a man's life?
b. Which is more important to us, what Jesus said, or what he did?

EXERCISES

1. May work and prayer be dissociated successfully?
2. Suggest why God should wish to give his followers power "to release the spiritual resources" available?
3. If you were asked to pray in the Congress of the United States, what preparation would you make?
4. Point out the use of prayer in the primitive church at critical times as recorded in the Acts.
5. What did the psalmist mean when he said, "The Lord is my refuge and strength"? What kind of "strength," physical, mental, moral, financial?
6. Is it possible to pray without ceasing?
7. What is intercessory prayer? Is it necessary?
8. Does depending on God make man a weak dependent; or what is the result of the intimate association?
9. Make a brief outline of the chapter.

CHAPTER VII

The Peril to Stewardship

INTRODUCTORY

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

JOHN WESLEY never showed more keenly his powers of discernment than when he said, "Christianity has in it the elements of its own destruction." Of course the statement needs explanation, and Wesley proceeds to explain: "When a man becomes a true Christian he becomes industrious, trustworthy, and prosperous. Now, if that man, whilst he *gets* all he can and *saves* all he can, does not *give* all he can, I have more hope of Judas Iscariot than of that man!"

Evidently, the burden of this message from an old sermon is this: Godliness brings prosperity; prosperity creates property; but property brings the peril of a divided heart. Therefore, blessed is the man who keeps property in its proper place, even as God said at the beginning, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Thus the present chapter is an appeal to the church to uproot the prevalent sin of covetousness, a sin that is the more devastating because it stalks abroad in the guise of respectability, not only blocking the progress of the Kingdom but deceiving the very elect. Pity the man whose money intended to be his servant, actually becomes his master; who does not see property in the light of a stewardship, not to be lavished on self, but to be used for the saving of the community and of the world—in the name of God. Property can bless to heaven or tempt to hell.

Among the growing clouds of witnesses to this truth is Mr. Roger W. Babson, who goes further than Wesley, suggesting how nations as well as individuals are blighted by the lust for wealth.

"Just before I went to Brazil," says Mr. Babson, "I was the

guest of the President of the Argentine Republic. After lunching one day we sat in his sun parlor looking out over the river. He was very thoughtful. He said, 'Mr Babson, I have been wondering why it is that South America, with all its great natural advantages, is so far behind North America, notwithstanding that South America was settled before North America.' Then he went on to tell how the forests of South America had two hundred and eighty-six trees that can be found in no book of botany. He told me about many ranches that had thousands of acres under cultivation in one block. He mentioned the mines of iron, coal, copper, silver, and gold, and all those great rivers and water powers which rival Niagara. 'Why is it, with all these natural resources, so far behind North America?' he asked. Well, those of you who have been there know the reason, but being a guest, I said, 'Mr. President, what do you think is the reason?' He replied, 'I have come to this conclusion: South America was settled by the Spanish, who came to South America in search of gold; but North America was settled by the Pilgrim Fathers, who went there in search of God!'"

The author of the above tale significantly adds, "Let us American citizens never kick down the ladder by which we climbed up." It is characteristic of the insidious sin of covetousness that it leads to this very thing.

When Mr. Gilbert Chesterton said, "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting—it has been found difficult and not tried," he might have been writing an introduction to a tract on the Christianizing of property, for without question the greatest hindrance to Christian conquest at this hour is the unconsecrated money in the hands of members of the Christian Church. Here is terrible evidence of the widespread grip which the sin of covetousness has gotten upon professing Christians. And there can be no doubt that this is so, and that it is so in direct disobedience to the teachings of the New Testament.

Take just one of the statements of Jesus, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." Since the days of the early church what generation of Christians has taken these words seriously? The devil of covetousness has helped us either to dodge them altogether or explain away their meaning. Certainly, we have not tried them and found them wanting. On

the other hand, they have been found difficult and not tried. Meanwhile Christ has been wounded in the house of his friends, and his disciples have degenerated in the midst of luxuries and pleasures that unconsecrated wealth affords. Hear John Wesley again on this point. His language may be vigorous, but no one will question his earnest purpose to save his people from loving money more than God. He says: "Some of you Methodists are twice as rich as you were before you were Methodists; some of you are fourfold as rich; some of you are tenfold as rich; now if, whilst you get all you can and save all you can, you do not give all you can, then you are tenfold more the child of hell than you were before!"

But what *additional* evidence is there that the love of money is indeed perilous? Call the witnesses. In the first place, there is the testimony of the Old and New Testaments. Then, as already indicated, there is witness from the experience of men and nations. We will record them all in the "Daily Readings," but for the present consider this typical case of a modern business man who tells the story of "Why I stopped getting rich for riches' sake."

"My first shock occurred when one day an old man came into my office. He was a Scotchman whom I had known from my boyhood. He came to America a poor boy; both he and his parents had struggled with poverty, and he had inherited the spirit of frugality and thrift. My earliest recollection of him was as a young man filled with ambition, strength, and capacity for enormous endeavor, fun-loving and kind. I now saw an old man, broken and shattered; *the open, generous expression had gone from his face, and another force was host of the citadel of his soul. He had become very rich, but had neglected other graces.* His children had wandered away into different ways, none of them honoring to the father. He told me his story; his life was bitter, and the end was unsatisfactory. Indeed, he said that if he were back again in Scotland among the heather hills, free to choose the course of life again, he would gladly give up all the wealth his life had been dedicated to secure. Tears dropped from his eyes as he told me this, and I imagine that tears had for a long time been a stranger to his hard face. It made me think, What was the difference between the course I was taking and the one which he, at my age, had pursued?"

Like the prodigal son, the younger business man—warned

by this living example of a shriveled soul—came to himself. Out of his struggle with his passion for riches and for worldly success, he says: "There is a sin in the church that we are afraid to mention. What is its common name? I will tell you what its common name is, and what its aristocratic name is, and what its historical name is, and what its scriptural name is. It is *covetousness*." "Oh, well," you say, "that is not so bad. That is a pretty white sort of sin, in fact, almost a virtue, for it is just saving, isn't it? Being thrifty, being shrewd; that is what covetousness is, isn't it? In that case, even if Paul and Isaiah and Jeremiah and some others speak of it as a sin, it cannot be so bad." Well, let us see what Paul says about it, what his idea of the thing is. Hear what he says:

"For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."—Eph. 5. 5.

"Now that is awful. Surely Paul had gotten excited in speaking to the Ephesians. Surely he did not mean that a man who simply hangs onto this world's goods should be classified in such frightful company as fornicators and idolaters. It must be that he was excited that day. Let us see what he said to the Colossians when he spoke to them:

" 'Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.'—Col. 3. 5.

"That is just about as bad as the other. Surely, Paul does not mean to speak thus about a man who gets a good big pile of money, and then is kind enough to go to church and respectable enough always to put a nice crisp bill on the plate, which is as much as he has given during the week tipping porters on the train and in restaurants. Surely, Paul does not mean that a man who is as good to God as he is to the waiter could be guilty of a sin classed with idolatry and uncleanness. Let us see what he says somewhere else. In Romans, for example:

" 'Being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, *covetousness*,¹ maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit,

¹Not italics in original.

malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents.'—Rom. i. 29. 30.

"Here we are in this day of our Lord with a sin within our church that is condemned more violently in the Scripture than any other sin. Search the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find the idolatry of Astoreth or Baal denounced in as lurid language as is this sin of covetousness. . . . This is the sin that made Achan a thief, that made Gehazi the leper white as snow, that made Ananias a liar, that made Judas betray Christ. This is the kind of sin we are not saying much about. . . . Come, men of the Kingdom, let us talk about this thing! Let us dig out its cancerous roots! Let us meet it squarely; let us turn the world's finger of scorn from the church that shelters our wives and our little children."

It is impossible to find any comprehensive definition of "covetousness." Definitions can help, but cannot go to the root of the peril. To say that covetousness is "inordinate desire," or that a covetous person is "avaricious," "greedy," or "mercenary," is hardly to define adequately. All of these definitions must be further explained. For our purposes it may be enough to declare that *covetousness is the arch enemy of Jesus' philosophy of stewardship*; it makes self the center and circumference of the universe. It is the negation of everything that stewardship stands for. It creates a selfish, cruel world without a God and without a heaven.

"I looked upon a sea,
And lo! it was dead,
Although by Hermon's snows
And Jordan fed.

"How came a fate so dire?
The tale's soon told.
All that it got it kept
And fast did hold.

"All tributary streams
Found here their grave,
Because that sea received
But never gave.

"O sea that's dead! Teach me
To know and feel
That selfish grasp and greed
My doom will seal.

"And help me, Lord, my best,
Myself to give,
That I may others bless
And like thee live."

DAILY READINGS

Seventh Week—First Day

Let it not be supposed that covetousness is a sin that grips the rich man alone. "It has worked as a gangrene into the whole fabric of Christian society. There are plenty of people that do not have capacity to earn more than fifteen dollars a week, the citadel of whose life is clenched as tightly in the grip of covetousness as that of the millionaire." *Indeed, the ubiquitousness of this sin explains why covetousness is a peril not only to the individual but to nations.* At the close of the Great War a high government official declared, "We would have had a veritable riot of greed had it not been for the restrictions imposed upon 'business' by the national government." This statement is certainly unexaggerated, and demonstrates how nations may be at the mercy of a prevalent sin. A nation can make progress only as it learns the stewardship principle that "to have is to owe."

Indeed, the real character of a nation can be determined by subtracting its expenditures from its income, and then making a study of the items of expense. This is what Dr. Edwin M. Poteat has done in the two quotations that follow:

"While we were at war we laid by in perfectly good savings at a good per cent of interest one billion dollars a month in liberty bonds. . . . If we had had our present wealth in George Washington's day, we could have bought every foot of ground on the earth's surface, paid cash, and had money in the bank. The war transformed us from a debtor to a creditor nation."

"But it is worth while to remind ourselves that all our war charities—Red Cross, war work drive, Salvation Army, war

chests, etc.—probably fell short of \$700,000,000. That is to say, they did not equal in amount the interest of a single year on our liberty bonds.”

It seems evident that, while America is moved now and then by spasms of benevolence, the “spasm” does not very deeply affect us nor does it last very long. Only a small portion of our people have as yet triumphed over covetousness to the point where generosity becomes systematic and habitual, while sacrifice is a word understood by only a few. A careful study will establish the conviction that the person is an exception who does not annually expend more for personal or family luxuries than for religion and benevolence and public education combined. Certainly, these facts seem to suggest that a modern nation can face the same peril which the prophet Jeremiah declared was threatening covetous Israel.

For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness: and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall; at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

—Jer. 6. 13-16.

MEDITATION

“I did not know till neath the rod
I passed how sore I needed God;
In sorrow’s night lo! like a star
I saw his love shine from afar.

“I did not know till on a grave
I saw the wind-blown grasses wave
How futile and how fugitive
The baubles are for which we strive.

“I did not know until above
God called the idol of my love
Beyond the reach of yearning eyes
How beautiful is paradise.” —*Susie M. Best.*

Are we to congratulate ourselves or commiserate ourselves on these enormous and inconceivable figures? John Ruskin raised the question whether wealth might not better be called "illth," as tending to our ill being rather than our well-being; and certain it is that every great civilization which has perished, perished after a period of great prosperity.
—Edwin M. Poteat.

A PRAYER

O Lord, renew our spirits, and draw our hearts unto thyself, that our work may not be to us a burden but a delight; and give us such a mighty love to thee as may sweeten all our obedience. Oh let us not serve thee with the spirit of bondage as slaves, but with the cheerfulness and gladness of children, delighting ourselves in thee and rejoicing in thy work. Amen.—Benjamin Jenks.

Seventh Week—Second Day

Evidently, *the damning characteristic of covetousness lies in what it leads to.* It lures men on. The commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," is God's warning against countenancing the very beginnings of sin. "Is a stingy man a covetous man?" "Is stinginess wickedness?" The surprise with which these questions are so often asked clearly indicates the stealthiness with which this sin creeps on the unsuspecting, and, with sweet deceit, fixes one's affections on *things* rather than life. There is apparently little harm in the request of the man in to-day's Scripture, but Jesus sees the snake of covetousness lifting its poisonous head and he cries, "Beware."

And one out of the multitude said unto him, Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me. But he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.—Luke 12. 13-15.

MEDITATION

I have had many people resort to me for confession. The

confession of every sin that I have known or heard of, and of sins so foul that I never dreamed of them, has been poured into my ear. But no person has ever confessed to me the sin of covetousness.—*Francis Xavier.*

“To live as gently as I can;
To be, no matter where, a man;
To take what comes of good or ill,
To cling to faith and honor still;
To do my best and let that stand
The record of my brain and hand;
And then, should failure come to me,
Still work and hope for victory!

“To have no secret place wherein
I stoop unseen to shame or sin;
To be the same when I’m alone
As when my every deed is known;
To live undaunted, unafraid
Of any step that I have made;
To be without pretense or sham
Exactly what men think I am.”

—*Edgar A. Guest.*

A PRAYER

O Lord, my Lord, have mercy upon me. “I bow my forehead to the dust, I veil my face for shame, and plead in trembling self-distrust, a prayer without one claim.” Not only my heart, Lord, but my mind—sanctify my mind by the enlightening power of thy Holy Spirit, that being able to detect the very beginnings of sin, however pleasant or alluring, I may be cleansed from all covetousness, whether of the world or the flesh or the devil; and seeking only and always thy glory, be found at last among the victorious in thy Kingdom, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Seventh Week—Third Day

The tragedy of Ananias and Sapphira is one of God’s most striking warnings concerning the sin of covetousness. “If God should deal as drastically with the church members to-day who covet prominence but hold on to their money, what percentage of the church members would be carried out

dead?" This question was addressed to a certain minister, who found it convenient to answer, "Such questions should be left to the Great Judge."

So they should, but this does not make void the terrible warning of to-day's Scripture that covetousness brings certain judgment. *Moreover, the curse does not go single-handed. The lust for preeminence generally accompanies the love of money.* Covetousness has this one thing in common with stewardship, in that it cultivates an ambitious spirit, but there is a world of difference in the motive and result. Some one comparing Napoleon and Phillips Brooks, said, "The one sought the world for himself, the other sought the world for Christ."

In the end all covetous desires must result in soul-tragedy. So Dr. George Clarke Peck is right when he says that "the best way to get ahead is to get ahead of yourself." Any other kind of "getting ahead" must surely fail. This is the lesson that Ananias and Sapphira did not learn, and which covetousness never teaches.

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou has not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost: and great fear came upon all that heard it.—Acts 5. 1-5.

MEDITATION

The most sensitive spot in the surrender of the whole life to God is my property. Perhaps it is because my property provides me with material comforts, selfish satisfactions, and gratifies personal tastes and appetites. It may be that my property represents so much of myself; so much of my toil, so much of my effort; so much of my time, so much of my strength; that it is my very self. . . . The question is, "Who is owner—God or myself?" If God, then I must

surrender all to him. Sometimes the conflict is severe and long. Always man has attempted to except his property from the surrender; but when I begin to condition my surrender, then I begin to compromise; and to compromise with God is fatal to my soul.—*Bishop Theodore S. Henderson.*

“Wealth is a means, and life the end;
 You lose your hoard, have what you spend.
 For that unhappy mortal clay
 Who never learned to give away!
 His heaped-up wealth made him its slave;
 He did not use, who never gave.” —*Saadi.*

“Oh joy supreme! I know the voice—
 Like none beside on earth or sea;
 Yea, more, oh soul of mine, rejoice,
 By all that he requires of me,
 I know what God himself must be.”
 —*John Greenleaf Whittier.*

A PRAYER

O Lord, come quickly and reign on thy throne, for now oftentimes something rises up within me and tries to take possession of thy throne; Pride, Covetousness, Uncleaness, and Sloth want to be my kings; then Evil-Speaking, Anger, Hatred, and the whole train of voices join with me in working against myself and trying to reign over me. I resist them, I cry out against them, and say, “I have no other King than Christ.” O King of Peace, come and reign in me, for I will have no king but thee! Amen.—*Saint Bernard.*

Seventh Week—Fourth Day

Another peril grows out of the fact that *covetousness silences the instinctive question of the good steward*—“*What am I here for?*” The question that covetousness asks is not, “*What am I here to do?*” but “*What am I here to get?*” “*My Father’s business*” becomes an after thought, if remembered at all. A pastor in an Eastern city one day went to a wealthy lady in his congregation to urge her to furnish the one hundred and twenty-five dollars needed for some local charity in which the church was interested. The lady was not as much noted for her generosity as for her

wealth. She demurred. Finally the pastor said, "Well, sister, you pray over the matter this week, and if on Sunday you still feel that you should not give this money, just tell me so and I will say nothing more to you about it." The pastor relates that on the next Sabbath he opened his eyes after the benediction to see his good parishioner rushing frantically toward the pulpit with a roll of bills in her outstretched hand. "Here!" she cried, as she thrust the money in his hand, "take your money. I have not been able to enjoy my prayers all this week!"

Of course it was not the minister who spoiled her prayers. She was simply experiencing the struggle that her money-drugged soul was making in trying once more to save its possessor from the deadening grip of covetousness. The same thing is seen in to-day's story of the rich young ruler who went away sorrowful. The Scripture says, "He went away sorrowful for he was one that *had*¹ great possessions." As a matter of fact, *his great possessions had him*.

And as he was going forth into the way, there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, *even God*. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor thy father and mother, And he said unto him, Teacher, all these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.—Mark 10. 17-22.

MEDITATION

"Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy with cheeks of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lips, redder still,
Kissed by strawberries on the hill.

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¹Not italics in original.

"From my heart I give you joy—
I was once a barefoot boy.

"Let the million-dollaréd ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!"

—John G. Whittier.

We begin to operate with vital forces when we cross the border into the land of sacrifice. Christ does not begin his reckoning, we do not come within the range of the heavenly standards, until all superfluities have been peeled and stripped away. The things that we can spare carry no blood. The things that we can ill spare carry part of ourselves, and are alive. He that spared not his own Son, the one he could not spare, gave himself with the gift, and in the wealth of the sacrifice our redemption was born.—J. H. Jowett.

A PRAYER

O Lord, how I love thy law! Surely it is better to be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to possess the riches of the world for a season. Hold me steadily in thy presence; let not the vain ambitions of this world enthrall me, nor the covetous desires of the flesh possess me; preserve my peace. "The world is so much with us," be thou my strength; give me thy joy, that, always master of the world, it may never master me. Through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

Seventh Week—Fifth Day

Covetousness leads to the death of all stewardship consciousness *because it virtually ignores God's claim to ownership, refuses to consider his call to service, and blindly closes its eyes to the inevitable day of reckoning.* When one seeks to analyze the sin of stinginess it is found fundamentally in appropriating for self that which in the first place belongs to God, and, secondly, has been placed by the heavenly Father at the disposal of and for the use of *all* his children. One of the early church fathers summarizes this truth in these words:

"Understand then, ye rich, that ye are in duty bound to do service, having received more than ye yourselves need."

The passage of Scripture that follows is the only one in the New Testament where Jesus used the word "fool" in the sense of "idiot," but this is only one of the thousands of examples where love for money dethrones reason.

And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.—Luke 12. 16-21.

MEDITATION

There is a tomb stone in Florence, Italy, which reads: "Here lies Estrella, who has gone to Heaven to enjoy a fortune of fifty thousand florins which she sent ahead of her in good deeds." Ah, there is joy in stewardship. . . . Our methods of making and spending money in this life will be either our torment or our bliss in the eternal world so near ahead.—*R. H. Bennett.*

"So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan that moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go, not like the quarry slave at night
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust; approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."
—*William Cullen Bryant.*

A PRAYER

O Lord Jesus, who for our sakes didst become poor, we pray thee to protect them that are rich in this world, that they

may not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in thee, the living God, who givest us richly all things to enjoy. Grant them grace so to use their wealth that they may do good, and be rich in good works, ready to distribute and willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.—"Sursum Corda."

Seventh Week—Sixth Day

It should be observed that this tenth commandment *has a unique relation to all of the others*. If Achan had learned to check his evil desires upon their first appearance, he would not have stolen the "devoted" thing and thus brought a curse upon himself and all the people of Israel. All thought of the stewardship intrusted to him and to his people vanishes as he entertains his lust for gold. But sin will out, and the result is the defeat of the army of Israel as they move forward from Jericho to the conquest of the next heathen stronghold. Is there not a striking parallel between the position of Joshua and the Israelites as they humble themselves in the dust after their defeat, and the situation of the modern church as it stumbles or weakly advances in the face of the open doors of to-day in all the world? Are present-day Christians using for themselves the "devoted" things which God has commanded should be used for the Kingdom? This question certainly is pertinent when American Christians are spending more for candy than for all the work carried on by the church both at home and abroad. A well-known layman expresses some concern that the United States should invest a billion dollars a year in life insurance for this world, and only four hundred million for the support of the kingdom of God. But this comparison is insignificant in the face of the tremendous bill for luxuries which church members are piling up while the Kingdom halts.

And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, . . . Oh, Lord, what shall I

say, after that Israel hath turned their backs before their enemies! . . .

And Jehovah said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore art thou thus fallen upon thy face? Israel hath sinned; yea, they have even transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: yea, they have even taken of the devoted thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also; and they have even put it among their own stuff. . . . And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Of a truth I have sinned against Jehovah, the God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: when I saw among the spoil a goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.—Josh. 7. 6-8; 10, 11; 20, 21.

MEDITATION

The love that builds palatial homes and fills them with luxurious furnishings and costly statuary is not a love for God or humanity. I do not envy homes built for fame and prestige. I tremble for their inmates lest they banish Christ who loves the lowly, lonely, hungry, shivering, neglected ones. He allows comforts, but not luxury, until all God's claims have been met; and never were more millions facing starvation than to-day right in the heart of Christendom. It is surely not God's time for building fortunes out of his bounty, or for the American people to be untrue to their stewardship of freedom and equal opportunity for all peoples.—*Bishop Earl Cranston.*

"In vain we call old notions fudge,
And bend our conscience to our dealing;
The Ten Commandments will not budge,
And stealing will continue stealing."

—*Lowell.*

A PRAYER

O Lord, grant us never to parley with temptation, never to tamper with conscience; never to spare the right eye, or hand, or foot that is a snare to us; never to lose our souls, though in exchange we should gain the whole world. Amen.

—*Christina G. Rossetti.*

Seventh Week—Seventh Day

"Can a rich man be saved?" is the question of to-day's study. And one answer is, "Certainly, a rich man can be saved, but not as a rich man." Dr. Poteat phrases it thus: "No man is ever admitted into the society of the King of Love except as a pauper both as respects material worth and moral worth. It is because he sees and acknowledges his unspeakable destitution, his bankruptcy of soul, that he cries, 'Save, Lord!'"

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

But the peril of the rich man lies in a growing inability to see his "unspeakable destitution," his "bankruptcy of soul," either because of self-esteem which increases under the attentions and flatteries of his "friends," or because, as Jesus suggests, he comes to trust in Mammon rather than in God. "When I had nothing I found it easy to trust in God, but after my inheritance came it seemed as though that were the only thing between me and the poorhouse." This was the explanation which an honest soul gave to her minister in answer to his inquiry, "Why have you decreased your contributions to the church?" Accordingly, while the stewardship passion for Christ's kingdom is endangered by a hundred perils which riches bring, the danger which Jesus emphasizes most seems to be that of substituting trust in money for trust in God. A suggestive illustration of this comes from Scotland. A certain rich man was giving his testimony, recalling the day when his total wealth was a shilling. "That night," he said, "I wandered into a mission, and when the collection was taken I dropped it all in." Rather pompously he continued, "From that day I have prospered, for I gave everything I had to the Lord."

An old saint sitting on the front seat, who had been listening very intently to the man, ejaculated: "Ye dare na do it again! Ye dare na do it again!"

Indeed here is the crux of the matter. A rich man *must* dare to fix his trust solely on Christ if he is to be saved. This means, of course, the acceptance of the principle of stewardship, and the recognition of God's ownership, not of a tenth

merely, but *of all*. As Jesus said, "He that renounceth not *all that he hath*, he cannot be my disciple."

And Jesus said unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And when the disciples heard it, they were astonished exceedingly, saying, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon *them* said to them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.—Matt. 19. 23-26

MEDITATION

Money is danger. We pass by too easily the searching, warnings words of Jesus. Nothing can fool men like money. It seems so powerful that it makes men forget the Supreme Power. It feeds pride until a man thinks he has no need of God. It constantly invites selfishness. It commands so many things that men forget the real goods which it can never purchase: righteousness, love and a clear conscience. There is only one way of escape: an evil master, it can be a splendid workman; the minister of hell may become a servant of light. All power is danger except as we link it to some high goal.—*Roger W. Babson.*

"The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one,
Yet the light of the whole world dies
With the setting sun.

"The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of the whole life dies
When love is done."

—*Francis William Bourdillon.*

A PRAYER

O Almighty God, grant, we beseech thee, that we whose trust is under the shadow of thy wings, may, through the help of thy power, overcome all evils that rise up against us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.—Roman Breviary.

OUTLINE—SEVENTH WEEK THE PERIL TO STEWARDSHIP

1. Introductory: Covetousness Is Idolatry.
2. First Day: Who Are Covetous?
3. Second Day: Covetousness Misleading.
4. Third Day: Vices that Follow Covetousness.
5. Fourth Day: Purpose Affected by Covetousness.
6. Fifth Day: The Day of Reckoning.
7. Sixth Day: Distorted Vision.
8. Seventh Day: Saving Rich Men.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* What, if any, is the danger, or sin, in wanting wealth, earning, holding, or spending money, and controlling property?
b. How prevalent is covetousness among the people you know?
c. What difference does it make whether a man search for gold or for God?
d. Under what conditions may we be Christian in our business and social life?
e. What does this mean, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth"?
2. *a.* What persons are apt to be covetous? Why?
b. How may a nation be covetous? a poor man? one without income?
3. *a.* Why cannot a man love other men and money at the same time? Are we ever warranted in "loving" things?
b. Why is personal affection purifying?
4. *a.* What sins naturally follow covetousness? What virtues?
b. In what way must consecration be final, once for all? How progressive, daily, hourly?

5. *a.* What difference does covetousness make in our attitude toward our work? toward God? toward the needy? toward our fellows? toward eternal life?
b. Does our Father desire that we sacrifice? practice asceticism? have abundance?
6. *a.* Why is faithful stewardship an evidence of sanity? sound ethics? morality?
b. Why is the rich farmer called "The Rich Fool"?
7. *a.* What is luxury? necessity? Should all be limited to a "living wage"? If we neglect our needy fellow, against whom do we sin?
8. *a.* What is it "to renounce all," "full consecration"? How may we acknowledge complete reliance on God?
b. Why does the Heavenly Bridegroom refuse to "marry for money"?
c. Are they promised prosperity who prove their faith by their paying?
d. Why is the love of money a root of all kinds of evil?

EXERCISES

1. How may one become a slave of his possessions? Outline the steps.
2. What is covetousness? Can you define it satisfactorily?
3. Just why is covetousness "the arch enemy of Jesus' philosophy of stewardship"?
4. How does covetousness lead to ambition?
5. How may we discover if we own, or are owned? belong to the Kingdom, or hold a church membership as a convenience?
6. Why does a Christian steward acknowledge God's ownership?
7. Discuss how misuse of resources defeats the coming of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
8. Discuss the relation of selfishness to the love of money.
9. Write a résumé of the teachings of this chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

Stewardship and Property

INTRODUCTORY

THE Christianizing of property is probably the greatest task that confronts the church of the twentieth century. When Horace Bushnell said, "One more revival—only one more—is needed, the revival of Christian stewardship, the dedication of the money power to God," he had the vision of a greater task than most readers have supposed. Certainly, the Christian conquest of the whole realm of property, business and industry was in his vision. Mr. Clinton Howard, in tracing the stride of God down the centuries, has selected the great events of the last five centuries as follows:

"The great event of the 16th Century was Discovery, Geographic Emancipation.

"The great event of the 17th Century was the Reformation, Spiritual Emancipation.

"The great event of the 18th Century was Democracy, Political Emancipation.

"The great event of the 19th Century was Abolition, Physical Emancipation.

"The great event of the 20th Century thus far has been Prohibition, Moral Emancipation."

What will be the next great event? There will be different answers doubtless, according to different standards; but from the standpoint of the Church of God, *the greatest task of the twentieth century must be the emancipation of the church from the pagan ideas of property* which seem to have been accepted by the successors of the early church, as a part of the price paid for the official recognition of Christianity by the Roman Empire. It was a terrible price!

Perhaps the most drastic result of Pentecost was the attainment of the divine ideal of property as a stewardship.

The story is to be found in the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where the early Christians come, not only face to face with the greatness of their task, but with the unspeakable joy of spiritual fellowship with their Lord. What matter that their lives are threatened, or that they are warned not to preach any more in the Name? What matter that persecution is growing more intense, that many have lost possessions and employment, and others have been disowned by relatives and forced to seek shelter elsewhere? Singing in their hearts is the enthusiasm of a great experience. They are intrusted with the great commission of spreading abroad the gospel of their risen Lord. Only one difficulty looms on the horizon—it is that of material support. How are the persecuted, the unemployed, and the missionaries to be supported? Many a man in every age has fallen from the heights of moral and spiritual heroism when the material support of himself or his family has been threatened; but this was not the case in the early church. The Holy Spirit shook the room where they prayed; the revival fires burned more intensely than before; and in the heat of these fires came forth the vision of a great Brotherhood, in which the *material* as well as the spiritual welfare of every member was to be the concern of every other member—and of God. Luke, who tells the story in the fourth chapter of the Acts, says, “The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul, and *not one of them said that aught of the things that he possessed was his own.*”

Now, this did not mean communism, as some have attempted to say; *it was stewardship*. For the first time since the dawn of creation the angels of heaven looked down on a church that gave anything like a perfect acceptance of the divine principle of God’s ownership of all property. Pentecost had brought to light what God had been trying for centuries to instill in the heart of his church: *property is to be held by individuals as a stewardship for the Brotherhood of the Kingdom*. This is as far removed from “communism” as Bolshevism is from Christianity. When “not one of the disciples said that aught of the things that he possessed was his own,” this meant that his possessions belonged not to the Brotherhood but to God. There was evidently no attempt on the part of the leaders of the church to secure from its members a legal right to personal possessions in the name

of Brotherhood. "There was no least compulsion among them," says Dr. Harvey Reeves Calkins, "neither was there any general conversion of possessions and goods into money for the purpose of general distribution, but only 'as every man had need.' This last statement is twice repeated, and wholly discredits various attempts to make the New Testament sponsor for fantastic schemes of property division."

The monumental truth is that the early church accepted as practical and binding the divine principle that property actually belongs to a personal God, who gives it to men *only in trust*. As an early church writer says, "Our possessions belong to God, to be used for the Brotherhood." Referring now to the present-day Christianity, Mr. George Innes insists that the first step toward Christianizing property must be this renunciation of ownership: "Property is Christ's. He created it. We never did. It is his." It seems inevitable that we must conclude that this ideal is practical and scriptural, and that the church of to-day must attain unto it before it can redeem the world.

The next chapter in the history of the church is the story of a great apostasy. About the year 323, after long centuries of persecution, Emperor Constantine was baptized a Christian, and Christianity was recognized by the Roman Empire. Then came compromise, and afterward tragedy. One thinks of Browning's words:

"Oh the little more, and how much it is,
And the little less, and what worlds away!"

Surely the tragedies cannot be overestimated that have resulted from the lost opportunity of Christianity, when, flushed with its great victory in winning recognition at home, it compromised its pure doctrine concerning property to obey the lure of pagan practices. Bishop Charles Gore, of Oxford, refers to this apostasy as the "disappointing fact that when Christianity became the established religion it did so little to impress the idea of property upon the law and customs of the later empire."

And the disappointment here mentioned is the greater because the Christians of the first three centuries *did* keep their lights brightly burning, evidently holding fast to the question of the early church: "But whoso hath the world's goods,

and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3. 17.) And witness some of the words of those leaders who immediately followed the apostles: "For if we are sharers in that which is imperishable, how much more in things perishable!" This latter statement concludes a dissertation on stewardship found in the early church catechism called "*The Two Ways*." And there are many others:

"Rich is that man who hath much money, and in imitation of God, bestows from what he hath; for God giveth all things to all for his own creatures. Understand then, ye rich, that ye are in duty bound to do service, having received more than ye yourselves need. Learn that to others is lacking that wherein you superabound. Be ashamed of holding fast to what belongs to others, imitate God's equity and none shall be poor" (*The Preaching of Peter, second century*).

"For he who holds possessions as God's gifts, both ministering from them to God the Giver, unto man's salvation, and knowing that he possesses them for the brethren's sake rather than his own, . . . not being a slave of what he possesses, and not carrying them about in his soul, but ever laboring at some good and divine work, . . . he is the man deemed blessed by the Lord and called poor in spirit, . . . not one who could not live if not rich" (*Clement, third century*).

"We who mingle in mind and soul have no hesitation as to fellowship in property." [Christians are] "by heavenly law to imitate the equality of God the Father. . . . After this example of equality, he who is a possessor on earth shares his returns and fruits with the Brotherhood, in being by his free bounties not only open-handed but also just, is an imitator of God the Father" (*Tertullian, third century*).

A careful reading of the foregoing quotations from prominent fathers of the first three centuries makes it evident that the church of those years had not fallen away from the teachings of Jesus and Pentecost concerning God's ownership of wealth. After reviewing the whole field of these utterances, Dr. Frank Bartlett¹ of Oxford, referring to the compromise that followed the Roman conquest, says: "On

¹See essay on *Property, Its Duties and Its Rights*, with introduction by the Bishop of Oxford.

the whole a great chance was lost; and the social order remaining at this crucial point unadjusted to the full spirit of the gospel of the Divine Father and human Brotherhood, came to react adversely on Christian ideals of property generally. Broadly speaking, the idea of property as a social and economic institution really remained pagan, and so far as embodied in the law, Roman in spirit and presuppositions."

And this is the situation also at the present time—the theory of property that still maintains, even among earnest churchmen, is dominantly pagan. The question is, What is the church going to do about it? What tragedies, wars, and bloodshed might have been averted but for the apostasy of the Romanized Church! What will be the tragedies of tomorrow unless the church repents, purifies herself, and returns to the teachings of Christ and the early fathers? Says Mr. Stitt Wilson, "If the authority of Christ stops at the bank vaults and factory gates and outside the storehouses of the profiteer, then the religion of Christ will become a hissing and a byword." These words may be exaggerated, for the church has changed little in its attitude toward property for fifteen centuries; but certainly a new day is dawning. The masses are being educated. "A greater revolution in Christian thinking and practice than the reformation or the Evangelical Revival is now before the church, for the supreme issue before the conscience of Christendom is the just and Christian use, control, and administration of property. Herein is the bloody angle of the world's confusion and chaos." It is not difficult to understand what a layman in the city of New York meant when he recently said, "I have decided to be a Christian steward; for I am persuaded that the time is near at hand when we must choose between an actual ownership by the Almighty of property and business, or some radical socialism and state ownership which revolutionary masses will force upon us if things go on as they are."

These are some of the signs of the times. The Church dare wait not very much longer to free herself from the taint of her ancient apostasy. The time has come to consider carefully every item in Jesus' teaching concerning property and wealth.

DAILY READINGS

Eighth Week—First Day

First of all, Jesus taught that riches are not an evil thing in themselves. Indeed, to accept any other view is to rebuke the Almighty for having placed the gold and silver in the mountains and the cattle upon a thousand hills. When the saints of the Middle Ages fled away from the riches of the world, they were simply adding to the problems of the later Christians. Wealth is not to be despised, but Christianized. It is a shame to bring up our children to despise the rich man because he is rich; it would be as unfair as to despise the poor man because he is poor. Neither is right.

Of course every one has the privilege of choosing his own profession, but when the ex-business man in a leading magazine tells the story of his disgust for the chase for the dollar under the caption "Why I Gave up Business to Teach," one asks himself, "Would it not have been a braver thing to have continued in business in order to demonstrate that the passion for business conquest and money-getting can be dominated by Christ's passion to serve?" When this comes to pass, property becomes a mighty asset to the Kingdom. Mr. B. C. Forbes¹ tells the story of how Mr. James B. Duke, with daring energy, boosted the sale of cigarettes in the United States from 200,000,000 to 1,000,000,000 a year in something like three years, and invested for advertising alone the annual sum of \$800,000. Not satisfied with his success in America, Mr. Duke went to England and captured the tobacco market there. If such achievements can be made by capital in the name of the gods of this world, what mighty victories for the Kingdom are awaiting the day when capital shall be laid at the feet of the Son of God.

To destroy or discount capital is indeed like discounting the value of the timber lands that store up the rains and snows to keep running the mighty rivers when the summer heat licks up their flowing waters. American industries could not long keep going if it were not for capital—neither could the missionary enterprises of the church. In to-day's Scripture Jesus gives a brief but significant hint of the eternal value of our gold:

¹*Men Who Are Making America*, by B. C. Forbes.

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles. He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much. . . .

I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

—Luke 16. 9, 10; John 17. 15, 19.

MEDITATION

Jesus continually said, "Be thrifty and accumulate, but do it in the best interest of your family, your friends, your neighbors, your community, your countrymen and the entire world, that all may be healthier, happier and more prosperous." This is what he would recommend. By so doing one would make enduring investments which moth and rust would not corrupt and which thieves would not steal.—*Roger W. Babson.*

"Life is a sheet of paper white,
Whereon each one of us may write
His word or two, and then comes night.
Greatly begin! Though thou hast time
But for a line, be that sublime.
Not failure, but low aim, is crime."

—*James Russell Lowell.*

A PRAYER

O God, we heartily pray thee to send thy Holy Spirit into the hearts of them that possess the grounds and pastures of the earth, that they, remembering themselves to be thy tenants, may not rack or stretch out the rents of their houses or lands, nor yet take unreasonable fines or moneys, after the manner of covetous worldlings, but may so let them out that the inhabitants thereof may be able to pay the rents, and live, and nourish their families, and remember the poor. Give them grace also to consider that they too are but strangers and pilgrims in this world, having here no dwelling place, but

seeking one to come; that they, remembering the short continuance of this life, may be content with that which is sufficient, and not join house to house and land to land, to the impoverishment of others, but may so behave themselves in letting their tenements, lands and pastures, that after this life they may be received into everlasting habitations. Amen.

—Prayer Book of Edward VI.

Eighth Week—Second Day

While property and capital are to be regarded as tools by which Christian stewardship is to work, Jesus taught that *a love of the tools is not only unwise but absolutely wicked*. The big reason, of course, is that a love of the tools keeps us from remembering the purpose for which they were given. Then life becomes dwarfed because we live for "the means" instead of "the end" of our existence. Indeed, love of money distorts the whole vision of life, and leads not only to wicked practices but to certain alienation from God. One of the most needed but most neglected warnings that ever came from the lips of Jesus was, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth" (Matt. 6. 19). In his later life John Wesley said: "I do not remember that in three score years I have ever heard a sermon preached on the danger of riches—and what author has declared it from the press? I have frequently touched upon it, but I have never either published or preached any sermon expressly on the subject. It is high time I should." In commenting upon these words, Dr. L. O. Hartman¹ declared, "The church has come very near dishonesty in its dealings with men of wealth. . . . Never before has the church brought such pressure to bear upon men of large resources for financial assistance. . . . But have Christian leaders been zealous enough about the deepening of the lives of their benefactors, or in a straightforward denunciation of the sins of the wealthy?"

But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith,

¹In *Zion's Herald*, March 22, 1922.

and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses.—1 Tim. 6. 9-12.

MEDITATION

He just cannot write his name to large checks. He does not know how. He has never learned. His hand is paralyzed.

—William E. Sweet.

He had died dwarfed had he not broken the bonds of mere money-getting; would never have known himself had he not learned how to spend it; and ambition itself could not have shown him a straighter road to fame.—Woodrow Wilson, in *When a Man Comes to Himself*.

"In men whom men condemn as ill
I find so much of goodness still,
In men whom men pronounce divine
I find so much of sin and blot,
I do not care to draw a line
Between the two, where God is not."

—Joaquin Miller.

A PRAYER

May God the Father, and the Eternal High Priest Jesus Christ build us up in faith and truth and love; and grant to us our portion among the saints with all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray for all saints, for kings and rulers, for the enemies of the cross of Christ; and for ourselves we pray that our fruit may abound, and that we may be made perfect in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

—Bishop Polycarp, 85 A. D.

Eighth Week—Third Day

Christian stewardship teaches us that *alongside of the sin of loving money is the companion sin of thriftlessness and waste*. When Jesus said, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost," he was issuing a warning against the careless

use of anything which a needy humanity can use. Thriftlessness is not generally the sin of the producer of wealth. More often it is the sin of the poor, and the children of the rich. If Mr. Herbert Hoover is right in his surmise that the United States spends a million dollars a day in superfluous eating in hotels and restaurants, it is probably true that many times this amount is wasted by those who cannot afford to eat in such places.

It should be remembered that the bases of great fortunes were laid by men of thrift. Mr. George Eastman, of kodak fame, began work at three dollars a week, and saved thirty-seven dollars and fifty cents the first year. By virtue of thrifty habits he saved the four thousand dollars which gave him his chance when opportunity beckoned. Out of fifty of America's foremost business and financial leaders to-day, twenty-four were born poor and seventeen were born in moderate circumstances. Every one of them started with habits of thrift. Says Mr. Babson, "Economic studies show that ninety-five per cent of the employers are employers because they systematically saved money." He continues, "Any man who systematically saves money from early youth automatically becomes an employer. These same studies show that ninety-five per cent of the wage-earners are wage-earners because they have systematically spent their money as fast as they have earned it. They of necessity remain wage-earners."

It is apparent that if Jesus were on earth to-day he would urge every individual and family to maintain a budget, break habits of wastefulness, and keep expenditures well within earnings. Christian stewardship has not only to do with the acquiring of property, but with wise saving and careful spending. Consecrated money goes too far in the Kingdom conquest for Christians to be careless in the use of it.

Jesus therefore lifting up his eyes, and seeing that a great multitude cometh unto him, saith unto Philip, Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat? . . . One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many? . . . So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down;

likewise also of the fishes as much as they would. And when they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost.—John 6. 5, 8-12.

MEDITATION

Get all you can; save all you can; give all you can.—*John Wesley.*

For upwards of eighty-six years I have kept my accounts exactly. I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction that I save all I can, and give all I can, that is, all I have.—*Last entry in Wesley's Journal.*

"Across the fields of yesterday
He sometimes comes to me,
A little lad just back from play—
The lad I used to be.

"And yet he smiles so wistfully,
Once he has crept within,
I wonder if he hopes to see
The man I might have been."

—*Thomas S. Jones, Jr.*

A PRAYER

Father of all, wilt thou teach me how to promote the well-being of thy children? If my outlook be selfish, wilt thou make it brotherly? May my life be like the house of many mansions, with room for the entertainment of my brethren. Amen.—Bishop Wilbur Patterson Thirkield.

Eighth Week—Fourth Day

How much money can a man have and still be a Christian? Or, in terms of citizenship, how much property can a man have and still be a good citizen? When the Christian seeks an answer to questions like these, he is confronted with two radically different theories. On the one hand, political communism says: "All property should be held by the state. Private property should be abolished." On the other hand, certain capitalists insist that one may hold all the money he can get. They point to the fact that the richest man in the world is a professing Christian, that the majority of

millionaries are professing Christians; and conclude with the argument that if you limit a man's freedom to acquire, you take away his motive to produce. Which of these theories is right? Neither one. The Bible gives sanction to neither of these radical propositions. In the "Introductory" to this chapter we have already seen that the so-called "communism" of the early church was nothing more nor less than a communism of interests in Christian brotherhood, leading members to share with the brethren their *private* property *as there was need*. On the other hand, the Old and New Testament teach that *God does sanction the institution of private property*, but with the qualification that it be "for use"¹ and not "for power." No man has really a right to hold more for himself than he needs. Bishop Charles Gore says on this point: "Property 'for use'—what a man needs for the true freedom, what even at the utmost he is able to use—is a very limited quantity on the whole. Very speedily as it expands, it becomes 'property for power'; it becomes at last the almost unmeasured control by the few rich, not of any amount of unconscious material, but of other men whose opportunity to live and work and eat becomes subject to their will. There is where property has so manifestly gone wrong."

Accordingly, in the eyes of the Scripture, a person has a right to all the private property he needs for the welfare of himself and his family. Beyond that he has no moral right to any property that he will not use *as a stewardship for the good of the community*. The justice of this is seen when one remembers that property gets its value from the community. Dr. Poteat strikingly illustrates this by saying: "If Mr. Carnegie when he sold his business to the United States Steel Corporation had taken his \$500,000,000 in a single certificate and started upon a voyage around the world, so long as he was in society, that is, a member of the ship's passengers, he could be said to have wealth. But let the ship be wrecked and let Mr. Carnegie find himself on an island in the South Pacific, and his \$500,000,000 would be worth exactly nothing."

It is perfectly in accord with Christianity that the government should take a percentage of the income of its citizens, and, indeed, an ever larger percentage as the incomes increase, for community uses. In the ancient story of the giving of

¹See *Property, Its Duties and Rights*, introductory essay by Charles Gore, Bishop of Oxford.

the manna to the children of Israel we find valuable instruction as to where private property begins and ends:

Then said Jehovah unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or not. . . . And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoar-frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, What is it? for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat. . . . And Moses said unto them, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and became foul: and Moses was wroth with them.

And they gathered it morning by morning, every man according to his eating.—Exod. 16. 4, 14, 15, 19-21.

MEDITATION

The Christians were a persecuted body. They had no power of controlling the law of the society of the empire, but within their own *voluntary* society the claim of the Brotherhood was paramount. The scoffer Lucian notes this as their characteristic: "It is incredible with what alacrity these people support and defend their common interest—the interest of any of their number—and spare nothing in short to promote it."—*Bishop Charles Gore*.

"If I can stop one heart from breaking
I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life from aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin into his nest again,
I shall not live in vain."

—*Emily Dickinson*.

A PRAYER

O Lord, the Lord whose ways are right, keep us in thy mercy from lip-service and empty forms; from having a name that we live, but being dead. Help us to worship thee by righteous deeds and lives of holiness; that our prayer also

may be set forth in thy sight as the incense, and the lifting up of our hands be as an evening sacrifice. Amen.—Christina G. Rossetti.

Eighth Week—Fifth Day

"I saw the spires of Oxford
As I was passing by,
The gray spires of Oxford
Against the pearl-gray sky.
My heart was with the Oxford men
Who went away to die."

Among the very few good things that came out of the Great War was a universal realization of the stewardship of citizenship—that the rights of private property and private life are always secondary to the welfare of the community. This is the lesson taught by Miss W. M. Letts in her excellent poem. However much we magnify our private life in time of play, when war comes the truth appears:

"The hoary colleges looked down
On careless boys at play,
But *when the bugle sounded war*
They put their games away.

"They left the peaceful river,
To seek a bloody sod;
They gave their merry youth away
For country and for God."

The first thing to remember about the rights of private property is that, *while insisted upon in the Bible, these are always made secondary to the welfare of the community.* The second, and even more fundamental, fact is the claim of God taught by the law and the prophets and by Jesus and his disciples that *the rights of all private property are subject to the sanction of God, the only absolute owner.* This is the meaning of David's prayer at the close of to-day's study. And, indeed, this is the insistence of Jesus when he speaks those sobering words denying discipleship to those who are not ready to renounce "all that he hath." This is not a

command, as some have thought, to renounce all property and possessions; rather it is a charge to renounce personal ownership *in favor of God's ownership*. Given Christian soldiers who are heroic enough to live this life of stewardship, the King can build his towers of the Church, and with a Gideon band can put to flight twice the number of the enemy.

Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have *wherewith* to complete it? Lest haply, when he hath laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and asketh conditions of peace. So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.—Luke 14. 27-33.

MEDITATION

For God provides the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature, by the labors of the plowman, the skill and pains of the artisan, and the dangers and traffic of the merchant: these men are, in their calling, the ministers of the Divine Providence and the stewards of creation, and servants of the great family of God. . . . So that no man can complain that his calling takes him off from religion; his calling itself, and his very worldly employment in honest trades and offices, is a serving of God.—*Jeremy Taylor*.

"I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade;
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with death.
When Spring brings back blue days and fair
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous."

—*Alan Seeger*.

A PRAYER

Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness and the power. . . . and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou rulest over all; and in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. . . . But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. . . . O Jehovah our God, all this store. . . . cometh of thy hand, and is all thine own. . . . O Jehovah, the God of our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee. . . .—I Chron. 29. 11, 12, 14, 16, 18.

Eighth Week—Sixth Day

A decidedly important teaching of Christian stewardship is that *property is always secondary to personality*. Just as the "Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath," so property was made for man, and not otherwise. It is necessary to have a clear conviction as to these relative values: Two men were standing on the pier together as the steamer was leaving the dock. "That steamer," said one, with deep satisfaction in his voice, "is carrying a ten thousand dollar missionary equipment for me to serve the Chinese." "That ship is carrying my son for life service in China," said the second. Then said the first, "Oh, I have given nothing in comparison with what you have given!"¹

In spite of the fact that theoretically men recognize the supreme value of human personalities, so great is the human passion for profit that even to-day, after a generation of education on this subject, most of our industries are conducted primarily for the making of money and not for the making of manhood or the conservation of life. This statement is by no means exaggerated. When life-insurance statistics show that industrial wage-earners have an expectancy of life hardly half as great as that of the leisure classes, it is evident that industry is too much stained with the life

¹*The Congregationalist*, November 17, 1921, p. 627.

blood of the workers. Here is a fact that Christianity must face if we are to keep faith with Christ and his children. "We use up one batch of men as fast as we can, and when they are done we throw them aside and get another." According to Dr. Harry F. Ward,¹ this was the regretful admission of one big business leader concerning the effect of his industry upon the lives of immigrant workers. Such a fact opens new territory for the home missionary endeavor of the churches.

While the above incident may be unusual, nevertheless a study of our present industrial order will reveal volumes of facts terrible enough to warrant a repetition of the voice that once said, "Thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." The lesson for all this must be that property was made for man, and not man for property; that property is fundamentally nothing more than a stewardship to be used for the welfare of humanity, for whom God made it to exist. In God's mind, the one great end of all creation was the human soul.

Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*—Matt. 6. 25, 26; 28-30.

MEDITATION

Certainly, in our own little sphere it is not the most active people to whom we owe the most. Among the common people whom we know it is not necessarily those who are the busiest, not those who, meteorlike, are ever at the rush on some visible charge for work. It is the lives, like the stars, which simply throw down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being upon which we look and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage.—*Phillips Brooks.*

¹*The Gospel for a Working World*, Harry F. Ward, chapter I.

[VIII-7] THE MESSAGE OF STEWARDSHIP

"I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare;

"I would be friend of all—the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving, and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and live."
—Harriet Arnold Walter.

A PRAYER

O Lord, my lord, "how excellent is thy name in all the earth." Still sweeter, Lord, to me: how excellent is thy name in my own soul. Abide with me this day; so shall my every labor be a song, and from my life shall come a strength and a cheer to bless the comrades of my toil. Make me the steward of thy grace to-day, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Eighth Week—Seventh Day

When Paul instructed Titus that Bishops of the church must "be blameless as God's stewards; . . . not greedy of filthy lucre" (Titus 1. 7), he was simply referring to Christ's standard. The Christian must not love money. Indeed, Jesus taught that *the first test of sincere stewardship is the money test*; or, as a skeptical physician phrased it, "You can tell the interest of anyone in anything by the way he puts his money into it"; and, as a churchman said, "Money-giving is the truest index we have of a vital human interest." Both of these quotations seem to agree with Christ's memorable words, "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Luke 16. 11.) Here is the truth that we should more honestly hold up to the light in a day when mammon is the greatest enemy of the church. It seems evident that the use the Christian makes of his money will determine his final judgment. In to-day's Scripture notice the words with which James denounces the holders of unused wealth: "Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you." Evidently, the writer has in his mind those who have disregarded Jesus' command not to lay up surplus riches for

themselves where *rust* gathers. A comparison of these two passages of Scripture should startle the whole church into a more serious consideration of the scriptural doctrine of property, especially at this hour when the world's terrible need is the opportunity of the Christian:

Come now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted; and their rust shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days. . . .

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.—James 5. 1, 3; Matt. 25. 34-36.

MEDITATION

We face the tragedy of a dying world, and the peril of a nation rich beyond all compare, called of God to service and hesitating in her choice between a life of sacrificial endeavor and one of selfish indulgence. This constitutes an emergency unparalleled in all the Christian centuries.—*S. Earl Taylor.*

"It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be never so fair—
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care
In the heart of the deed so fair.

"The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold,
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold,
By the love that cannot be told."

—*Harriet McEwen Kimball.*

A PRAYER

O Lord, turn thy light this morning upon any unconsecrated corner of my heart. Help me to know myself. Too readily

am I able to see the faults of others. Take, I beseech thee, the "beam from out mine own eyes," that I may see myself as thou canst see me. Search thou my heart; discover to me the hidden idols; help me to tear them down; O thou blessed Redeemer, "break down every idol throne, reign supreme and reign alone."—Amen.

OUTLINE—EIGHTH WEEK. STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY

1. Introductory: Christianizing Property.
2. First Day: Possessions Not Evil.
3. Second Day: The Love of Money.
4. Third Day: Thriftlessness.
5. Fourth Day: Possessions for Service, or Power?
6. Fifth Day: The Individual and the Community.
7. Sixth Day: Discipleship and Possessions.
8. Seventh Day: The First Test of Stewardship.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* What do we mean by "Christianizing property"? How do you Christianize your possessions?
b. What pagan conceptions of property did the Christian Church accept from the Roman state?
c. What is the relation of a man to his possessions coming out of the Pentecostal experience?
d. Can we be Christians without brotherhood?
e. Do you consider that all material values belong to God? What do you do about it?
f. What changes have appeared in the church's attitude toward money, wealth, wages, property, and income since the time of Constantine?
g. What relation is there between the attempted destruction of the Greek Church in Russia and the pagan attitude toward property?
2. *a.* Why is capital, stored-up value, necessary to the Kingdom?
3. *a.* How may those who become rich avoid "foolish and hurtful lusts"? Distinguish between "giving up" and "administering" property.
b. What are the dangers arising from riches?

[VIII-o] *THE MESSAGE OF STEWARDSHIP*

4. *a.* How may the thriftless avoid wasteful and dissipating habits? Overwork? Be miserly? Faithful stewardship?
b. Has the personal or family budget anything to do with religion?
5. *a.* May a man be a better citizen or Christian if he has property? no property? much property? little property?
b. What is the relation between property and freedom?
c. Can you distinguish between property "for use" and property "for power"?
d. Why is it wrong to dodge taxes?
6. *a.* Harmonize the subservience of the individual to the community with true democracy.
b. Does divine supremacy prove the necessity for autocracy, or pave the way for freedom and democracy?
c. What is Jesus' property test for his followers?
7. *a.* Name the things you regard as superior to personality.
b. Can we and our nation be economically sound if profits, income, property, and wealth are held superior to the workers?
c. What is the purpose of property? Why do you desire property?
d. How may a Christian grow?
8. *a.* What evidence do you find that a man must use his possessions righteously and unselfishly, in the Bible? in experience? in history?

EXERCISES

1. Why is property an obstacle to brotherhood? Is it necessarily so?
2. What is the Christian conception of "property"? When and where has it been accepted?
3. How may money-making ability be enlisted for the Kingdom?
4. How would you use money to produce eternal values?
5. Write a paragraph on the virtue of thrift?
6. What evidence do you find of Jesus' economy? of his generosity?

7. When is one warranted in allowing others to administer the values which God has intrusted to him?
8. What place has "life service" in Christian stewardship?
9. Why have Christians been so reluctant to receive at face value the teachings of Jesus regarding property?
10. Make outline of the teaching of this chapter.

CHAPTER IX

Business and Stewardship

INTRODUCTORY

NEXT to the task of bringing the church back to Christ's teaching concerning the stewardship of property, *the most important work before the twentieth century is the Christianizing of industry.*

As Bacon said, "Business should be conducted to the glory of God and to the welfare of the worker."

There are at least two reasons why. In the first place, no field of human endeavor has suffered more from the early apostasy from Jesus' teachings of property than has industry; and, second, *Christianity cannot conquer the world until the whole of human life has been redeemed.* Concerning the first, there is no doubt that human greed has caused more misery and more wars than any other one thing. If the church had refused to compromise with pagan ideas of property, how much of "man's inhumanity to man" might have been avoided!

Concerning the complete conquest of the whole of human life, Christianity cannot halt before the gods of industry and remain Christian. We are stewards of the total task. Jesus demands the conquest of *every* phase of life. Business and religion cannot be separated. The demand that the church forget to be concerned with the problems of industry does not originate in heaven.

Christianity must be concerned with industry because, like his Lord, the Christian must be concerned with humanity—and especially where humanity is in distress. And no person knowing the facts will dispute the statement that the world of industry "is a world of distress, selfish conflict, almost of anarchy to-day." On every hand men are asking the way out. The severest test that faces Christianity lies

here. Mr. Will Irwin¹ in his volume, *The Next War*, says, "Two great tasks lie before humanity and the race of the twentieth century." One of them he indicates as the "final elimination of war." The other, he says, is to "put under the control of true morals and of democracy the great power of human production which came in the nineteenth century." This can mean nothing else but the Christianizing of industry, and *the recognition of business as a stewardship*.

Indeed, the Christianizing of business may well be regarded as the twin problem with the elimination of war, for *there can be no ultimate hope of warring successfully against war until we can Christianize property and industry*. Returning from the Orient in 1921, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, speaking to this point, indicates the world's peril of business which has for its dominating motive the getting of profits. He asks: "Have Western nations clean hands themselves when they condemn Japan's policy? . . . We have all got to repent together. Selfishness has controlled the goals of Japan and Western nations in China, which has been regarded as an orange to be squeezed. . . . If Western nations do not repent of their godless gobbling of the world, let there be no pious preachments of 'Peace on earth, good will to men.' If selfishness is still to be in power, there will be war in the Far East, and when it comes it will be a real war."

And what the lust for dividends is doing in the Orient it has done for long years in other places. It was "profits" that led Germany into the crusade of commercialism which ended in the great World War. History records that when Bismarck took his first steps toward a colonial empire he made it clear that he was under pressure from commercial and industrial circles. He wanted "not provinces, but commercial enterprises." Other nations have been driven by the same motive—and are still driven. Mr. Leonard Woolf² shows how demoralizing has been this race for business, a race carried on with cruel disregard for life or property, in order that big commercial concerns might have raw materials and markets at their own price. For instance, he submits the following figures showing what shares the different European

¹*The Next War*, by Will Irwin. E. P. Dutton & Co., Publishers, New York.

²*Economic Imperialism*, by Leonard Woolf. Harcourt, Brace & Howe, publishers, New York.

states have taken in the partition of Africa. The seriousness of this indictment will be better understood when it is realized that only 390,000 square miles have been left to the free states of the dark continent. The table shows the area in square miles seized by the different nations:

	AREA	POPULATION
France	4,200,000	25,000,000
Britain	3,300,000	35,000,000
Germany	1,100,000	12,000,000
Belgium	900,000	7,000,000
Portugal	800,000	8,000,000
Italy	600,000	1,000,000
Spain	75,000	200,000

In commenting, Mr. Woolf says: "The military nature of this expansion of the French and British Empires must not, however, obscure *the compelling part played in it by economic motives*. The weapon of expansion was war for conquest. The *aims* of expansion were *markets, raw materials, and profits*."

Now, the story of economic imperialism is the sadder because it has been conducted oftentimes by Christian men and so-called Christian nations who have had one standard for Sunday and another for the market place. "Life must be unified," says Mr. Roger Babson. "We have discredited the double standard of morality. We are beginning to doubt the double standard which permits a man to separate his business and his personal conduct, or his week-day dealings and his Sabbath professions."

But altogether apart from the fact that economic imperialism certainly leads to war and bloodshed, *the distress of humanity in time of peace* is what furnishes the greatest indictment against the present industrial system. If it be objected that the industrial problem is complex, it must also be affirmed that it is *desperate*. If it is to be faced with caution, it is also to be faced with courage. Souls are at stake, and more, the honor of the church is in the balance.

In the first place it should be fairly understood that neither capital nor labor is to be blamed alone, nor is the industrial distress to be laid at the door of these two alone while the church goes scot free. "In the present industrial conflict,"

says Dr. William Austin Smith,¹ "I do not see unmistakably on either side the face of the Master. I can find it neither among those who claim to be conservative nor those who wish to be called radical. Both wish to possess and to hold. Both love riches; both make property the pearl of great price. When the labor leader sits across the table from the spokesman of capital in these heated conferences now taking place Christ is not in the discussion. It is a battle of wits; its weapons are cleverness, suspicion, the zest to keep what one has and to get more. I do not impugn the justice of the claims of either side; but the conflict has too little to do with Christianity, for the moment Christ enters a problem, the air is charged with a new principle. Love asks, "What can I give?" The world asks, "What can I get?"

Moreover, if capital and labor are both guilty, it must be kept in mind, in the second place, that both are suffering along with a suffering humanity. Says Mr. Roger Babson:² "There is one thing I am sure of, and that is that the present system does not work. The present system is failing in getting men to produce. . . . Our industrial system has resulted in almost stultifying men economically and making most of them economically nonproductive. Why? I do not know. I simply see what happens. The salvation of our industries depends on discovering something that will revive in a man that desire to produce and that joy in production which he had instinctively when he was a small boy." And if capital suffers, as Mr. Babson indicates, on the one hand, on the other hand the common man certainly has his greater grievances. Vachel Lindsay's picture of the "leaden-eyed child" is also really a picture of the mass of adult men and women too.

"Not that they starve, but starve so dreamlessly;
Not that they sow, but that they seldom reap;
Not that they serve, but have no gods to serve;
Not that they die, but that they die like sheep."

A very brief glimpse of the condition of the masses of working men is summarized in the following statement from the pen of Dr. Harris F. Rall:

¹*Christian Stewardship: The Way Out*, in the *Churchman*, May 29, 1920.

²*Fundamentals of Prosperity*, by Roger W. Babson. Fleming H. Revell Company, publishers, New York.

"First we must note his uncertain employment. This man has practically nothing ahead, for two thirds of the people of this country have nothing besides their furniture and their clothing and their few personal effects. Yet he knows that any day he may lose his job, and take the news back to his wife and children that look to him day by day for bread and hope. In August, 1921, the Labor Department reported five and three-quarter millions of laborers unemployed."

"Second, we must face the fact of the inadequate wage. Five years ago it was generally recognized that the minimum income, just enough to keep a family from going down physically and morally, was \$750. Yet even this standard was not reached by half the families of the country, according to the National Commission of Industrial Relations. Over half the wage-earners of this country received less than \$600.

"Third, beside this must be put the unequal distribution of wealth. . . . Professor King, of Wisconsin, estimates that 2 per cent of the people of this country own 60 per cent of the wealth, while 60 per cent of the people average but a few hundred dollars apiece. . . . Do you raise the question of the justice of a man having what he earns? . . . But the main question remains: Does it make for the highest human life on either side to have an industry which leaves a few with great wealth, and great numbers either in poverty or with less than a living wage?

"Fourth, one other fact this common man faces, and that is that he has no voice himself in this world of work. A few of his number do; they are organized and can make themselves heard, and sometimes they misuse the power that comes from this united strength just as the capitalist sometimes does; but this common man stands alone and is helpless. . . . He is told sometimes that labor and capital are partners, but in this firm the power rests all with one member. This is autocracy in business."

Of course the above paragraphs can hardly do more than indicate a line of study. However, we have marshaled here facts that clearly serve as a challenge to Christianity. How can Christian brotherhood be more than a dream while present industrial and social conditions exist?

Moreover, if these statements furnish a greater indictment

against capital, it must be remembered that the *Scripture enjoins that the strong must bear the burdens of the weak*. On the other hand, it ought to be said very loudly that perhaps the most disappointing feature of the present industrial situation is the apparent lack of any high Christian ideal in organized labor. Says Dr. Smith:

"The most terrible thing with which we are confronted to-day is the loss of morale among workmen. Once capital said, 'The public be damned!' Labor is now making this same jaunty assertion. Among the workers of the world there is growing everywhere a sullen spirit of irresponsibility, insolence, and a loss of craftsmanship and a love of the job. If this goes on, we shall witness the collapse of the industrial fabric." He adds: "We are witnessing to-day tests of strength between labor and capital. Whichever wins, the kingdom of God will lose."

What is the way out? We venture to assert that the problem is not primarily a question of economics—it is primarily a matter of religion and of Christian stewardship. Indeed, it is increasingly possible to back up this kind of an assertion with splendid utterances from the lips of strong business men all over the land. To quote Mr. Babson again: "Labor and capital are of little value until they are composed of people filled with the Spirit of God. The industrial problem will never be solved by employers' associations or labor associations or consumers' associations; but only as all get together as brothers filled with the Spirit of God. . . . Oh, if men would think more of religion and less of commodities, bank clearings, foreign trade, and immigrations!"

And yet there are some industrial leaders who declare that the church should keep out; but these men are thinking only of one side of the problem. Probably they are right in their insistence that the details of any new industrial order, or any plan of economic reconstruction, must be worked out not by "ministers" but by experienced industrial experts. But, on the other hand, they forget that *it is the burning business of the church to cry aloud in its demand that the stewardship principle of God's ownership of all property and business shall be actually applied in a practical way*. Remembering this, "the solution of the industrial problem is as simple as the alphabet but as hard as redemption."

In that splendid book of essays *Property, Its Duties and*

Rights,¹ the editor of the volume explains why no essay is included on *some particular plan* of economic reconstruction by saying, "*The primary task is to discover the ideal of property.*" Just so, Christ does not propose any particular program, but he does insist that a program will be forthcoming when business men shall dedicate their talents to God. During the World War America saw on a great scale the stewardship of citizenship. It was inspiring to see great industrial leaders ready to sacrifice personal interests in order to win the war. These men did not ask for programs; *they came with a great passion to serve, and made their own programs. But the passion to serve came first.*

Dr. James R. Joy not long ago said: "The Cincinnati clothing manufacturer who is trying to run his business according to the principles of the Sermon on the Mount said that a great many people write to him to ask for a copy of his 'system.' They have heard of his marvelous gain in production and think he must have devised a code of rules which others can copy. They are disappointed when they are told there is no rule but the Golden Rule—nothing but the working out of a principle—'Do as you would be done by.'" Here is a fact that students of the industrial problem too often overlook: Love will ultimately find a way, and stewardship is the ultimate solution of all the problems of industry, because the compelling principle is the forgetfulness of self.

DAILY READINGS

Ninth Week—First Day

It is sometimes said that Christianity is unfinished business. This fact underlies Jesus' command, "Ye shall be perfect." Paul took his Lord's words at their face value, and cried, "I press on!" Before the church or any individual can do very much toward Christianizing industry *there must be a conviction of sin—a keen realization that there is "unfinished business,"* and that there is no phase of human activity—no compartment in the human heart—which Christ does not claim as his field of conquest. "Either Christ is

¹*Essays by Various Writers with Introduction by the Bishop of Oxford.* The Macmillan Company, publishers, New York.

Lord of all or not Lord at all." A recent writer has said that "the so-called revivals of religion keep us safely off these sins in which great economic wrongs and social injustices are flagrant." It is hard to believe that such words state the whole truth. Perhaps it is fairer to say that the church is suffering from that early apostasy from Jesus' teaching concerning the stewardship of property and wealth; and that we need a new generation of John Baptists who shall help us to see the ramifications of our sins. In any case, *the first step to the solution of the industrial problem is an honest facing of the fact that industry is not deeply and thoroughly Christian: that it must be Christianized; and the responsibility rests not primarily upon some industrial experts but upon the Christian business men of the land.*

It is a significant thing that when the multitude came to John the Baptist, saying, "What shall we do?" he told them honestly to face the ungodly social order of their day, and to Christianize their own possessions and their business dealings.

And the multitudes asked him, saying, What then must we do? And he answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none: and he that hath food, let him do likewise. And there came also publicans to be baptized, and they said unto him, Teacher, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort no more than that which is appointed you. And soldiers also asked him, saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse *anyone* wrongfully; and be content with your wages.—Luke 3. 10-14.

MEDITATION

To reach old age, possessed only of money and a desire to increase it, is not success in life. It is a sad and terrible failure; better die a pauper in purse than a pauper in soul; better fail to get money than to allow money to get you.

—Unknown.

I thank thee just for life, the chance to live,
To be alive! So great thy gift, if thou dost nothing give
Besides, it is enough to breathe thy air,
To walk this mountain sod,
To feel the play of mighty winds,
To look thee in the face and call thee God. —R. S. C.

A PRAYER

O God, we pray for thy church, which is set to-day amid the perplexities of a changing order, and face to face with a great new task. We remember with love the nurture she gave to our spiritual life in its infancy, the tasks she set for our growing strength, the influence of the devoted hearts she gathers, the steadfast power for good she has exerted. When we compare her with all other human institutions we rejoice, for there is none like her. But when we judge her by the mind of her Master, we bow in pity and contrition. Oh, baptize her afresh in the life-giving spirit of Jesus! Grant her a new birth, though it be with travail of repentance and humiliation. Bestow upon her a more imperious responsiveness to duty, a swifter compassion with suffering, and an utter loyalty to the will of God. Put upon her lips the ancient gospel of her Lord. Help her to proclaim boldly the coming of the kingdom of God and the doom of all that resist it. Fill her with the prophets' scorn of tyranny, and with a Christ-like tenderness for the heavy-laden and down-trodden. Give her faith to espouse the cause of the people, and in their hands that grope after freedom and light to recognize the bleeding hands of the Christ.—Walter Rauschenbusch.

Ninth Week—Second Day

Jesus' gospel of stewardship maintains that *business cannot be truly Christian while it is conducted primarily for profits*. For the Master declared that the kingdom of heaven should be the first thing in any man's life. The reason for this lies in the fact that neither "profits" nor any other *thing* finally satisfies, as Robert Service indicates in these lines:

"I wanted the gold, and I sought it;
I scrabbled and mucked like a slave.
Was it famine or scurvy—I fought it;
I hurled my youth into a grave.

"I wanted the gold, and I got it—
Came out with a fortune last Fall—
Yet somehow life's not what I thought it,
And somehow the gold isn't all."

The trouble with the excuse-makers in to-day's Scripture comes from giving precedence to anything else—however good in itself—over the kingdom of God. Jesus declares that none who place the kingdom *second* can enter therein:

And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant came, and told his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame. . . . For I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper.—Luke 14. 18-21, 24.

MEDITATION

How difficult it is for the business man to live unselfishly! He must bear the handicap of a life whose main purpose is the accumulation of money. . . . Who is the most successful business man? Not necessarily the man who has the largest bank account; that is one measure of success, but not the finest. The most successful business man is he who renders the greatest service to mankind, and whose life is most useful.¹—*William E. Sweet.*

"To love someone more dearly every day,
To help some wandering child to find his way;
To ponder o'er a noble thought and pray,
And smile when evening falls:
This is my task.

"To follow truth as blind men long for light,
To do my best from dawn of day till night;
To keep my heart fit for his holy sight,
And answer when he calls:
This is my task." —*Maude Louise Ray.*

A PRAYER

Lord of the great sacrifice, restrain our eagerness for the

¹*The Business Man and His Overflow*, Association Press, New York.

things that are seen. Thy cross is our rebuke. Increase our spending for the things eternal. Lord of the sinless life, our hope is to become like thee. Fulfill our hearts in service, that our hope be not in vain. Lord of the holiest joy—the joy of boundless giving—teach us thy grace of losing, that our joy may indeed be full. The world counteth all things lost if it gain not the things it may reckon. Help us to count all things but loss, to win thee, the wealth unmeasured. Amen.—Bishop L. J. Birney.

Ninth Week—Third Day

Jesus' gospel of stewardship maintains that business cannot be actually Christian *while it interferes with the ideals of Christian brotherhood*, which must always be the case as long as the motive to get profits dominates. In one of his poems Whittier flashes a brief picture of love's contribution to life against the sad picture of existence where man is in bitter competition with man. He begins in these words:

"Still sits the schoolhouse by the road,
A ragged beggar sunning."

He paints for us a country schoolhouse, and then the picture of the little boy and the little girl walking home bashfully together—he ashamed because of his failure in the recently finished spelling match, and she sorry because she went above him.

"I'm sorry that I spelled the word,
I hate to go above you,
Because—the brown eyes lower fell—
Because,° you see, I love you."

In after years, with a pathetic touch, the poet makes this observation:

"Still memory to a gray-haired man
That sweet child face is showing.
Dear girl! The grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing.

"He lives, to learn in life's hard school,
 How few who pass above him
 Lament their triumph or his loss,
 Like her, because they love him."

Note in the Scripture lesson to-day the new motive which Paul puts into labor when he urges the *Ephesians* to work *in order that they may help those in need*. Indeed, every verse is looking toward the building up of a Christian brotherhood:

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need. Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.—Eph. 4. 28-32.

MEDITATION

Carlyle was forever insisting that the pursuit of wealth is not a "human bond"; and Mr. L. P. Jacks, commenting, says: "Seekers of buried treasure invariably quarrel among themselves for reasons which are manifest to a child. It makes no difference whether it is hidden in a pirates' cavern or in the bowels of the earth. They may arrange the most equitable scheme for the division of the spoils, and seal their mutual loyalty with fearful oaths, but before the voyage is over the captain will be dangling at the yard arm, and the deck will be slippery with the blood of half the crew."—*Edwin M. Poteat*.

"Let thy high manhood sacred be,
 And lift thy calling up to thee;
 Be true thyself, and thou shalt find
 An answering echo in thy mind.
 Keep thou thy faith with men, and see
 How men will keep their faith with thee."

—*Henry S. Kent*.

(To a youth entering business.)

A PRAYER

Blessed Lord, who for our sakes wast content to bear sorrow and want in death, grant unto us such a measure of thy Spirit that we may follow thee in all self-denial and tenderness of soul. Help us by thy great love to succor the afflicted, to relieve the needy and destitute, to share the burden of the heavy-laden, and ever to see thee in all the poor and desolate. Amen.—David R. Porter.

Ninth Week—Fourth Day

Jesus' gospel of Christian stewardship maintains that *business cannot be Christian so long as it divides men into warring groups*. One of the pathetic, although encouraging, signs of the times is to be seen in the way in which the different industrial groups claim Jesus Christ as their particular patron. For instance, Sarah G. Cleghorn says:

"Thanks to Saint Matthew, who had been
At mass meetings in Palestine,
We know whose side was spoken for
When Comrade Jesus had the floor.

"O let no Locale him refuse!
Comrade Jesus hath paid his dues:
Whatever other be debarred,
Comrade Jesus hath his red card."

Note the different attitude which the apostle Paul maintains in his exhortation to the Philippians: God is no respecter of persons; he is concerned with all kinds and conditions of men. You cannot claim Christ when you are fighting to get something from somebody else that he is ready to fight to retain.

If there is therefore any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions, make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; *doing* nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of

you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.—Phil. 2. 1-4.

MEDITATION

A little thought will show you how vastly your own happiness depends on the way other people bear themselves toward you. The looks and tones at your breakfast table, the conduct of your fellow workers or employers, the faithful or unreliable men you deal with, what people say to you on the street, the letters you get, the friends or foes you meet—these things make up very much of the pleasure or misery of your day. Turn the idea around, and remember that just so much are you adding to the pleasure or misery of other people's days.—*George S. Merriam.*

“Love’s on the high road,
Love’s in the by-road,
Love’s in the meadow, and
Love’s in the mart!

“And down every by-way
Where I’ve taken my way
I’ve met Love a-smiling—for
Love’s in my heart.”

—*Dana Burnet.*

A PRAYER

Eternal God, our heavenly Father, teach us at the beginning of every day the art of preparation, that we may better realize the glory of thy service. We would sit at the feet of thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. With longing and expectant hearts we cry to thee; sharpen, we beseech thee, our spiritual perception, that we may know thy will. Grant thy cleansing to our souls, that we may sanctify all things we touch. May the spirit of self-abandonment be ours. O thou who didst say, “We must work the works of him that sent me,” help us to do thy bidding all this day; and when the evening comes, grant us the joy of thy “Well done.” Amen.

—*J. Homer Slutz.*

Ninth Week—Fifth Day

Jesus’ gospel of Christian stewardship further maintains that industry is not Christian until it is run according to the

principle of the Golden Rule. Two gentlemen in an Eastern city were making an assertion of the above character when one of them observed that no single individual could ever afford to make the experiment of putting the Golden Rule into industry unless he could have united with him a thousand righteous employers who were ready to make the same adventure. It seems that such an assertion runs counter to all experiences. Progress has always been started by some lone pioneers. Indeed, such is the case in industry. The proprietor of a Cincinnati industry, after a remarkable adventure in business stewardship, says: "I had regarded the Golden Rule as the divine law governing human relationships. *It is the only equitable, workable, industrial, and economic law in the universe to-day.* I do not say it has solved all labor troubles in our factory; nay, it has done more—it has eliminated all labor troubles during the most trying industrial period in the world's history. I do not say it has driven out hatred, strife, and selfishness; it has done more—it has ushered in good will, contentment, cooperation, and happiness."

Indeed, concerning this particular experiment, an outsider has described the contagiousness of the Golden-Rule method in these words: "The recent act of the five hundred employees of the Nash Clothing Manufacturing Company, which is operated on the Golden-Rule basis, has won nation-wide approval. Both employer and employees had profited materially as well as spiritually to a surprising extent by the introduction of the Golden Rule into business. The employees, not to be outdone in well-doing, *have now decided voluntarily to surrender their jobs for a month in order to give work to the unemployed of other factories.*" Contrast with statements of this kind the denunciation by a current religious magazine of the mine cave-in at Scranton, Pennsylvania, which let down an area equivalent to four city blocks, wrecking many buildings and destroying several lives. The editor says: "And still the mine caves go on, because careless or conscienceless coal corporations, in their greediness to take out the last pound of coal to sell on extortionate terms, do not leave enough pillars to hold up surface ground with its dwellings, churches, stores, and even burying grounds." This kind of thing could not happen under a Golden-Rule regime.

All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. . . .

Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released: give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.—Matt. 7. 12; Luke 6. 36-38.

MEDITATION

Surely, the truth must be that whatsoever in our daily life is lawful and right for us to engage in, is in itself a part of our obedience to God; a part, that is, of our very religion. And whensoever we hear people complaining of the obstructions and hindrances put by the duties of life in the way of devoting themselves to God, we may be sure they are under some false view or other. They do not look upon their daily work as the task God has sent them to do and as obedience to him.—*H. E. Manning.*

"Is thy cruse of comfort wasting?

Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
It shall serve thee and thy brother.

Is thy burden hard and heavy?

Do thy steps drag heavily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden;
God will bear both it and thee."

—*Elizabeth Charles.*

"There is a destiny that makes us brothers,

None goes his way alone,
All that we send into the lives of others
Comes back into our own."

—*Edwin Markham.*

A PRAYER

Almighty God, cause me to look out this morning, and open wide my eyes, that I may see what great preparation thou hast made that I might live. May I be ashamed to start wrong and be unworthy of the glory of this day. Amen.

—*Margaret Bird Steinmetz.*

Ninth Week—Sixth Day

But as a matter of practical experience it is not enough to point in a general way to the Golden Rule as the solution of our industrial problems, for Jesus' gospel of stewardship maintains that *the ultimate acceptance of the Golden Rule in business depends upon the acknowledgment of God's ownership of property*. "Unless I am greatly mistaken," to quote Mr. Babson, "the fundamental conception that underlies all this discussion is this: Is the wealth that comes to a man his, or is it a trust fund?" It may be that the editor of a great magazine is right in declaring that twenty great leaders in our world of business, if they would unite their efforts and abilities, could change the whole industrial situation; but there is little hope that this beneficent result will be forthcoming unless those gentlemen are soundly converted to the point where they will accept Jesus' declaration, "Who-soever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." This is what Mr. George Innes evidently has in mind when he gives, both as the antidote for covetousness and the solution of the industrial problem, the four words: "Renounce ownership—accept stewardship." This is the message that lies behind God's ancient appeal:

Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; . . . and lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers.—Deut. 8. 11-14, 17, 18.

MEDITATION

Exceeding gifts from God are not blessings, they are duties.

They do not always increase a man's happiness; they always increase his responsibilities.—*Charles Kingsley*.

"Who does God's work will get God's pay,
However long may seem the day,
However weary be the way.

"Though powers and princes thunder 'Nay!'
No human hand God's hand can stay;
Who does his work will get his pay.

"He does not pay as others pay
In gold or land or raiment gay,
In goods that perish and decay.

"But God's high wisdom knows a way;
And that is sure, let come what may,
Who does God's work will get God's pay."
—*Dennis McCarthy*.

A PRAYER

Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord! Hear thou my cry. I need thee, for my heart is blind; it is deceitful and desperately wicked. Ofttimes I cannot tell where heaven ends and sin begins. O Saviour of the world, thou who canst see the first faint beginnings of evil, have mercy upon me. Purify my seeing, sensitize my soul, that my whole body, being full of light, I may walk the paths of righteousness and truth. Glorify thyself in me this day, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Ninth Week—Seventh Day

Jesus' gospel of stewardship maintains that *no industry can be Christian as long as profits are made at the expense of the physical, moral, or spiritual welfare either of the workers or the community*. Josiah Strong insisted that a tenement house could kill men just as surely as an ax. The same thing is true with factories or other industries where profits blind the eyes to the welfare of the worker or the good of the community. The words of the prophet poet Edwin Markham will ever furnish an indictment against those who forget that souls are of greater value than gold:

"Oh masters, lords, and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God—
This monstrous thing, distorted and soul-quenched?
How will you ever straighten up this shape?

"How will it be with kingdoms and with kings—
With those who shaped him to the things he is—
When this dumb terror shall reply to God,
After the silence of the centuries?"

Moreover, stewardship is not only concerned with the abolition of all forms of slavery and sweat-shop methods of production, but also with the question of whether a particular industry is a benefit or a detriment to the community. On this point Dr. Bartlett reminds us that the "ancient church was very sensitive about morally doubtful trades, and refused to receive for God's service, especially the relief of the poor, . . . anything made from such concerns, or to accept as members those who persisted in such trades."

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us. . . . For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat. . . .

But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. . . . Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you; that ye may walk becomingly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing.—2 Thess. 3. 6, 10; 1 Thess. 4. 9-12.

MEDITATION

To the Master the kingdom of God is in the very midst of a world bustling with all sorts of ceaseless activities—where men are buying, selling, and getting gain. It is no part of his plan to segregate his followers in association camps or cloistered cell. Rather would he have them carry the cross along the thronged thoroughfares, and into the very midst of the marts of trade and away to the further horizon. In barter and in all the bustle of a workaday world Christians

are to interpret the law of love in service and sacrifice.—*David McConaughy.*

“Work! Thank God for the might of it,
The ardor, the urge, the delight of it—
Work that springs from the heart’s desire,
Setting the brain and the soul on fire—

“Oh what is so good as the heat of it,
And what is so glad as the beat of it,
And what is so kind as the stern command,
Challenging brain and heart and hand!”

—*Angela Morgan.*

A PRAYER

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man; help us to perform them with laughter and kind faces; let cheerfulness abound with industry. Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonored; and grant us in the end the gift of sleep. Amen.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

OUTLINE—NINTH WEEK. BUSINESS AND STEWARDSHIP

1. Introductory: Christianizing Industry.
2. First Day: Unfinished Business—Sin.
3. Second Day: The Purpose of Business.
4. Third Day: Business Preventing Brotherhood.
5. Fourth Day: Business Causing War.
6. Fifth Day: Business and the Golden Rule.
7. Sixth Day: Acknowledging God in Business.
8. Seventh Day: Business vs. Worker.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* Why could men be Christian saints, during the nineteenth century, under pagan theories of property, and not be able in the twentieth century? Were they not just as truly their brother's keeper in the nineteenth century?
- b.* Is it possible to be both Christian and pagan, a part of each? If so, what is the result? If not, what is the result?
- c.* How may business be recognized as a stewardship?
- d.* Why must business be Christianized before war can be abolished?
- e.* In spite of the selfish motives has not the control of weaker peoples by stronger been a blessing?
- f.* Is it normal for multitudes to be economically distressed in times of peace?
- g.* What must be the difference between a Christian solution of industrial difficulties and all other solutions?
- h.* Why must man create, construct, produce, or be unhappy?
- i.* Outline the condition of laboring men as summarized by Dr. Rall.
- j.* Is Christian brotherhood possible under present social and industrial conditions?

- k.* Why is the industrial-economic problem primarily a matter of religion and stewardship?
- l.* Where can a man be definite in applying the principles of his religion?
- m.* How does a passion to serve differ from subserviency? What results from each?
- 2. *a.* In what way is "unfinished business" sin? Must we "finish" it, complete the job; or is "pressing forward" all that is expected of us?
- b.* What is the first step toward Christianizing industry?
- 3. *a.* What should be the object of business?
- b.* What is the promise to those who seek first the kingdom of God? Is it limited to any part of life?
- c.* Is it more difficult for business men to be unselfish than for other men?
- 4. *a.* What are some of the ideals of Christian brotherhood with which business now interferes?
- 5. *a.* How may ambition be kept alive where men do not struggle with each other?
- b.* What reasons have you to believe that Jesus respects all persons?
- 6. *a.* Is it possible for one man to practice the Golden Rule in industry when others may not be doing so?
- b.* Is the Golden Rule a necessary part of faithful stewardship?
- 7. *a.* How can a man enter the Kingdom and not admit that the earth is the Lord's?
- 8. *a.* Is industrial suicide as bad as suicide with knife, gun or poison?

EXERCISES

- 1. Discuss Bacon's saying: "Business should be conducted to the glory of God and to the welfare of the worker."
- 2. What do we mean by "the Christianizing of industry"? "The Golden Rule"? "The Eleventh Commandment"? Unselfishness? Organized charity? Socialism? Profit sharing? Living wage? Sanitation? Social hygiene? Justice?
- 3. Who is a Christian? Describe some one you believe to be a Christian.

[IX-o] *THE MESSAGE OF STEWARDSHIP*

4. What part has the Christian Church in present conditions and their reform, at home? in foreign lands?
5. Why is the practice of the Golden Rule necessary to Christianized industry?
6. Under what conditions is one warranted in remaining in employment that is bad for his or others' physical or spiritual welfare?
7. How would you discover the border-line between good industry and bad? (Write your tests.)

CHAPTER X

Stewardship and the Tithe

INTRODUCTORY

"LET us think for a moment," says Mr. Roger Babson, "what would happen if every church member in the United States should actually do as the Bible suggests, and set aside one tenth of his income for God. There are about forty million members in our Christian churches, with about forty billion dollars total income. Calculate the tremendous power summed up in one tenth of that amount—*four billion dollars!* Spent wisely and honestly, such a sum would establish all the additional schools necessary to fit our young men and women for a religious life. It would operate all the hospitals and training schools needed to treat all those who must go through life with physical handicaps. It would furnish sufficient money in a few years time to teach every living soul the principles of righteousness."

No one has ever questioned that a tithe of the income of professing Christians would finance the total program of the Kingdom; *but this striking statement by a great statistician cannot be accepted as a good financial plan for the church unless it can be shown that the plan in question would deepen the spiritual life and bring about the stewardship revival which is so greatly needed.* The piling up of vast sums of money, as advantageous as that would be, is not the end of the Christian program. There must be spiritual power and results. The Holy Spirit can only work through personalities who have accepted at least the beginning of Christ's philosophy of stewardship. The question is: "Will tithe-paying minister to this end?"

It happened a few years ago in Germantown, Pennsylvania, the writer was speaking to a national gathering of a great missionary society. The subject was "Stewardship." The

speaker was trying to bring his hearers to see the imperative-ness of stewardship as the Christian philosophy of life. The Christianizing of money and property was emphasized as the key to the solution of the problems of labor and capital, as well as other personal problems. He ended with the plea that Christians renounce ownership and subscribe to the platform of Jesus: "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." When the appeal was finished an opportunity for questions was given. A keen young woman rose to her feet and said to the speaker: "I share your solicitude that Christian people shall be possessed by the stewardship consciousness. I believe it must come before Christ's Church can possess the world; but how can we bring this message home? I want to ask you one question. You are acquainted with many Christians who truly are possessed of the stewardship passion. How did it come about? *Is it not true that most of them began by the acceptance of the principle of the tithe?*"

There was only one possible answer to make to that question, and the speaker made it. "Yes, it is a fact that most of the people whom I know as good stewards of their possessions began by setting apart the first tenth of their income. Many of them have graduated into a real sense of God's ownership of all, but there is no question as to how they began. Whatever may be said about the perils of subscribing to the ancient law of the tithe, it certainly has proved an excellent schoolmaster to lead men into the experience of stewardship."

This fact of experience is not to be wondered at, for it is in accord with the proverb that we are not to despise "the day of small beginnings." It may be that some exceptional persons do grasp the truth of the personal ownership of God all at once, but *most persons absorb truth by degrees, and it probably remains true that the best hope there is of getting the average man really to feel the stewardship of property is by some beginning of systematic and proportionate support of God's program for the Kingdom—and the tithe is such a beginning. Moreover, it carries with it the advantage of having a great historical and spiritual background.*

And the fact is that *this first step does bring a decidedly spiritual reaction.* Here is a typical testimony: "I began tithing at the beginning of the new year, and it has brought

a new joy into my Christian experience." It was the testimony of a young working girl; it can be duplicated a thousand times. Dr. Robert E. Speer has said, "I think every man will find, as every man who has passed through the experience can testify, that the acceptance of a principle like this marks a distinct era of a spiritual enlargement in his life." Moreover, the tenth as a beginning serves as a test to the honesty of purpose to accept stewardship as a life philosophy. It seems evident that there is little hope of combatting the natural covetousness of the human heart, or of really furnishing an adequate support for the Kingdom program until men are ready to set apart at least the tenth of their income as the earnest of their consecration.

There need be no mystery about it. With all the scriptural and historic associations which gather around it, it is a fair expression of the sincerity of our stewardship. In spite of all the Phariseeism and legalism which at times have concealed the spiritual meaning of the tithe, nevertheless it has marked the beginning of a new era in the lives of those who have come to practice it, and to see in it:

The Acknowledgment of God's Ownership;

The Token of Our Surrender;

The Fellowship with His Purpose;

The Pledge of Our Allegiance;

The Witness of Our Faith.

Indeed, it is not a question of legalism. It seems fair to say that the average man, at least the one who has heard of stewardship, is not so much deterred from tithing by the fear of legalism as by the *natural covetousness of his soul*. "Have you paid God's income tax for 1922?" was the caption of a recent stewardship message in a religious publication. And why not? Of course it ought to be a *voluntary* payment; but even should this not be the case, who loves his country less because he is compelled to pay an income tax? If there is any such citizen, certainly his patriotism is of a doubtful kind.

Dr. George Clarke Peck tells of a mother who came to open her heart to her pastor concerning her affectionate but heedless son: "Sometimes he makes me so glad that I try to forget how he is breaking my heart. He will put his arms around me and give me the tenderest kiss, all of impulse, and then go out and do things that fairly slay me." Then with a look

of exquisite suffering she added, "I would gladly do without the occasional rapturous kiss if I could see him steady and faithful." Does not that remind one of Jesus' words, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven"? It seems as if the time had gone by when Christians can talk' stewardship and shy at the tithe.

Certainly, there is evidence enough to confirm one in believing that Christians dare not longer neglect the tithe as a first step to stewardship. It is true that the Pharisees were tithers, but why should any reasonable being condemn a good habit because used by a bad man? On the other hand, remember the long list of great souls *who began their lessons in stewardship with the tithe, and continued on into the deeper things of God*. There they are—bankers and manufacturers, merchants and ministers, lawyers and editors, educators and statesmen. What names can be listed in this order of the "Knights of the Great Heart and the Open Hand!"

In confirmation of our proposition that the tithe is generally the beginning of the stewardship alphabet, Mr. James L. Sayler, a member of the Chicago bar, has in recent years made an interesting survey. Concerning his findings he says as follows: "It is sometimes said that the princely givers to the churches and to charitable and educational purposes have been men who *in the beginning of their careers have set aside a tenth of their earnings to religious and charitable purposes*. The statement has interested me, and I have made some effort to study such biographical matter as can be obtained, and through correspondence find the truth in these assertions." Mr. Sayler gives the result of his survey in a booklet entitled *American Tithers*.¹ After telling the story of more than a score of prominent American merchants, manufacturers, bankers, lawyers, and other leaders, he says that he is convinced that these examples justify one in concluding that the decision to tithe has been an important first step in the making of a multitude of philanthropists and truly successful men.

As a final testimony, consider the words of an English manufacturer, William B. Hartley: "Probably the greatest event of my life occurred on January 1st, 1877. On that day

¹The Abingdon Press, New York. 48 pages.

my wife and I made a written vow that we would devote a definite share of our income for religious and humanitarian work, and that this should be a first charge. Since that date we have often increased the proportion so that the original percentage is left far behind. The distribution of the Lord's portion has been the greatest joy of my life and a real means of grace. It has kept me in constant touch with the promotion of Christlike work of all kinds, and anything I have been able to do for Christ and humanity (including profit-sharing with my work people for over twenty years) has grown out of the vow made thirty-three years ago."

We have seen how experience teaches that the tithe is an excellent first step to the larger stewardship. Now, we must express the conviction that any argument for tithe paying that will be permanent *must take into consideration the teachings of the Scriptures, together with the traditional practices of the Church*. We believe that an honest consideration of all the available evidence would lead to such a new attitude toward tithing stewardship as would gradually save the church from the worship of mammon, which is the greatest enemy of the Kingdom at this hour.

But there are some real difficulties in the way of securing such a fair consideration of this subject. Of course the natural covetousness of the human heart is to be reckoned with. Here is an instance in question. It happened in a Southern convention. A colored layman was the speaker. He had risen to say, "While the preacher was preaching I was deciding—and it is settled. I have promised God that forever hereafter I will pay the tithe." "But," he continued, "I have a confession to make—and perhaps some of the other brethren could make the same kind—this ain't the first time I've heard about this tithing business. Like the rest of you, I've caught glimpses of it in the Book; but whenever I have, this is what I've done: I've turned the page, and said, 'Lord, that's too deep for me.'"

But apart from natural covetousness, the greatest hindrance to a fair hearing for the tithe is the *prejudice* that has grown up from the abuses which have followed, in those countries, where tithe paying has been made compulsory by legal statute, and the scandals that have arisen through the misappropriation and even deliberate stealing of the Lord's money. Volumes could be written on this phase of the subject. We have

only space for a single suggestive reference. Laws such as these from the English Statutes under Henry VIII may have been well intended, but the reaction against them has greatly retarded beneficence in all Christendom:

"Forasmuch as divers numbers of evil disposed persons . . . having no respect to their duties to Almighty God, but against right and good consciences have attempted to withhold . . . their tithes and oblations, as well personal as predial, due unto God and Holy Church," etc., it was decreed "that through all the King's dominions every subject, according to the ecclesiastical laws and ordinances in this Church of England, and after the laudable usages and customs of the parish or other place where he dwelleth or abideth, shall yield and pay his tithe," etc.—Statutes 27, Henry VIII.

Of course such laws as these have resulted from the union of church and state, but without question they have produced whirlwinds of prejudice and opposition to the whole subject of tithing stewardship. The lesson is obvious: Tithe paying under the Christian system must always remain a matter between the individual and his God. But in saying this we are simply placing tithe paying on the same plane with any other Christian obligation. This is where Jesus seems to have left it—in any case, earnest scholars and Christian leaders in every century have thought that he did, and the evidence is available and demands honest consideration.

After eight years of careful research, in which he has traced the history of tithing both in and out of the Scriptures, and in all the centuries since the early church, Dr. Henry Lansdell¹ concludes that the practice and preaching of tithing in the Christian Church "begins with the very commencement of church history, after that recorded in the New Testament, and continues steadily and increasingly, nearly every century yielding one or more writers who persistently uphold the doctrine that the tenth of a Christian's income is the property of and the least he should offer to God. . . . So again, conversely, while we have found all these testimonies in favor of the practice of tithing, we have not met with a single bishop of these centuries who ever condemned or opposed the doctrine, or even suggested that less than a tenth is the proper portion to be set apart for God's service."

¹*The Sacred Tenth*, by Henry Lansdell, D.D., vol. i, p. 207.

DAILY READINGS

Tenth Week—First Day

In the following statement Dr. Lansdell asks a question which every conscientious Christian will desire to answer: "It seems clear, then, in the light of revelation, and from the practice of, perhaps, all ancient nations, that the man who denies God's claim to a portion of the wealth that comes to his hands is much akin to a spiritual anarchist, whilst he who so apportions less than a tenth of his income or increase is condemned by Scripture as a robber. *Indeed, if in the days of Malachi not to pay tithe was accounted robbery, can a Christian who withholds the tenth be—now, any more than then—accounted honest toward God?*"

In the first place, it is significant that *the earliest instance of worship recorded in the Bible is accompanied by the offering of material possessions to God.* Throughout the Scripture, generally speaking, the worshiper is not expected to come before the Lord empty-handed. This good example was set by Abel and Cain:

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And Jehovah said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door, and unto thee shall be its desire; but do thou rule over it.—Gen. 4. 3-7.

Moreover, while the evidence is not conclusive, there is some reason to believe that *Cain's downfall grew out of his failure to bring the right proportion of his substance to the altar as a sacrifice.* On this point we can quote the Septuagint, or Greek translation of Genesis, in the sixth verse of the fourth chapter, which says:

And the Lord said to Cain, Wherefore didst thou become vexed, and wherefore did thy countenance fall? If

thou didst rightly offer, but did not rightly divide, didst thou not sin? Hold thy peace.

But the first undisputed mention of tithing in the Old Testament is found recorded in connection with Abram's presentation of the tenth of the spoils of battle to the priest Melchizedek. Evidently, the presentation of the "tenth" was made as an act of worship before God Most High, in acknowledgment that he was "possessor of heaven and earth." An outstanding question that faces one in this brief story is: *Where did Abram learn the obligation to pay the tenth?* It is not a sufficient answer to say that he may have learned it from the surrounding people like the Assyrians or Babylonians, who, according to undoubted evidence, certainly paid the tithe to their gods. Where did these heathen people learn to pay the tithe? Dr. Lansdell says concerning this: "We may venture the hypothesis that God from the beginning taught Adam that it was the duty of man to render a portion of his increase to his Maker, and that that portion was to be not less than a tenth; then we shall see that the facts recorded in Genesis not only do not contradict such a supposition, but corroborate and strengthen it."

And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, at the vale of Shaveh (the same is the King's Vale). And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all. . . .

After these things the word of Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. . . . And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.—Gen. 14. 17-20; 15. 1, 5.

MEDITATION

I love truth as much as any man, and if one will take me by the hand, go with me in search of it as of something we have both lost and neither can do well without, I will go

with him to the end of the world; but I hate strifes and contentions.—*Stern, Tristram Shandy.*

“Truth, be more precious to me than the eyes
Of happy love; burn hotter in my throat
Than passion, and possess me like my pride;
More sweet than freedom, more desired than joy,
More sacred than the pleasing of a friend.”

—*Max Eastman.*

A PRAYER

Almighty God, from whom all good things come; give thy grace, we humbly beseech thee, to those whom thou hast intrusted with riches; that they, as faithful stewards, may dispense them in the service of thy kingdom for the increase thereof; to the honor and praise of Him, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.—Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield.

Tenth Week—Second Day

In to-day's Scripture the tithe emerges out of the mists of the patriarchal days and becomes an institution in the life of the Hebrew people. It should be noted that even as God did not give the Sabbath as a *new* institution, but said “Remember the Sabbath day,” so he does not refer to tithe paying as a *new* requirement, but reminds the people that the “tithe is the Lord's.” There is only one reasonable inference to be made, namely, the ancient and holy obligation which Abraham had been taught in common with the heathen peoples is henceforth to be embodied in the new code of laws of the chosen people.

But it ought to be observed at this point that paying the tithe was much more than giving; it was the acknowledgment of God's worship. An indirect though vivid argument for systematic giving came some time ago from a mission worker who reported the words of a woman in a submerged section of the city. “I do not understand,” said the East Sider, “how you women can comb your hair every day; I comb mine once a year, and then it nearly kills me!” It can be added that system in giving, like system in hair-combing, would save many unnecessary pains. But God's purpose in asking the

tenth rises above systematic giving; indeed, the true steward cannot *give* any *thing* to God. All that he has to give is his own purpose to be faithful in his stewardship. Accordingly, whether he pays the tenth or some other proportion to the work of the church, or whatever proportion he uses for his own family—all of it is God's. Accordingly, the payment of the tithe as commanded to the new Hebrew nation was primarily a means of securing the acknowledgment of God's sovereign ownership.

And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is Jehovah's: it is holy unto Jehovah. And if a man will redeem aught of his tithe, he shall add unto it the fifth part thereof. And all the tithe of the herd or the flock, whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto Jehovah. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed. These are the commandments, which Jehovah commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.

The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul:
The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple.

The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart:
The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring forever:
The ordinances of Jehovah are true, and righteous altogether.—Lev. 27. 30-34; Psalms. 19. 7-9.

MEDITATION

A profound conviction raises a man above the feeling of ridicule.—*John Stuart Mill*.

For what, in dealing with this obligation, did the Jews not do? They contributed tithes, and tithes again for the orphans, widows, and proselytes. Now, however, we are wont to hear such and such a one say with astonishment, "So and so gives tithes!" How great a disgrace, I ask, is this: and what among the Jews was no matter of astonishment or celebrity, has now among Christians become a matter of surprise. If it

were a dangerous thing to fail in giving tithes then, to be sure it is much more dangerous now.—*Chrysostom*.

“Man’s life is but a working day
Whose tasks are set aright;
A time to work, a time to play,
And then a quiet night.

“And then, please God, a quiet night
Where palms are green and robes are white.
A long-drawn breath, a balm of sorrow,
And all things lovely on the morrow.”

—*Christina G. Rossetti*.

A PRAYER

O God, my Saviour, teach me thy will. What hast thou for me to do this day? What hast thou for me to say? Open thou my lips, that I may speak, but open first mine ears that I may hear. Help me to wait upon thy word. Save me from lost opportunities and from mistakes. Reveal to me thy every detail for my life. In nothing let me live apart from thee. Sanctify my home, my place of business, and my resting hours. So let thy heaven for me begin on earth below, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

Tenth Week—Third Day

It must not be supposed that the Jew stopped with the first tithe. That, indeed, acknowledged God’s sovereignty, but it did not fulfill his obligation. If some modern Christians have supposed that the tenth as a *voluntary* tax for the support of the Kingdom is a hardship, let them recall that the Jew was yearly asked for an amount that is estimated anywhere from a fourth to a third of his income.

In addition to the first tithe, *there was the second or festival tithe; and then, in addition to this, every third year a third tithe for the poor, the widowed, and the orphaned*. The Scriptures seem to be perfectly clear on this. Moreover, we have the testimony of several ancient writers. For instance, Josephus says: “Besides those two tithes which I have already said you are to pay every year, the one for the Levites and the other for the festivals, you are to bring every third year a tithe to be distributed to those that want; to women also

that are widows, and to children that are orphans." The command for the "festival" tithe reads thus:

Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed, that which cometh forth from the field year by year. And thou shalt eat before Jehovah thy God, in the place which he shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there, the tithe of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of the herd and of thy flock; that thou mayest learn to fear Jehovah thy God always.—Deut. 14. 22, 23.

It seems that the purpose of this second tithe was to enable the Israelite to assemble with his family at the sanctuary at stated times during the year, for the offering of sacrifices and for feasting before the Lord. In the twelfth chapter of Deuteronomy it is written:

And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, . . . and there ye shall eat before Jehovah your God, and ye shall rejoice, . . . ye and your households.

The third, or charity tithe, seems to be a prophecy that had its fulfillment at Pentecost when the members of the church gladly ministered to the brethren "as any had need," even to the selling of their property to obtain the funds. This was indeed stewardship at its best.

At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest. . . .

**Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart,
And lean not upon thine own understanding:
In all thy ways acknowledge him,
And he will direct thy paths. . . .
Honor Jehovah with thy substance,
And with the first-fruits of all thine increase:
So shall thy barns be filled with plenty,
And thy vats shall overflow with new wine.**

—Deut. 14. 28, 29; Prov. 3. 5, 6, 9, 10.

MEDITATION

The Christian who measures his giving by the standards laid down in the New Testament will ask himself, "What proportion of the income which God has given me the ability to earn would he have me keep for myself?" instead of, "How much ought I to give to him?" With these standards in vogue we would have fewer church members who spend more for the upkeep of their automobiles than they do for the upkeep of the Kingdom. I am not raising any moral issue, nor saying what one should or should not spend his money for. I am making an appeal for Christian men and women to give first things first place; and I do say emphatically that there is something radically wrong with the viewpoint of the church member who gives his luxuries first place in his financial calculations, and the support of the kingdom of God second place.—*William J. Elliott.*

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

• • • • •
"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

—*Isaac Watts.*

A PRAYER

Most gracious God, the fountain of all blessing, thou hast opened thy hand to fill us with all good things; thou dost govern us as a king; thou feedest us like a shepherd; thou keepest us beneath the shadows of thy wing in safety; thou providest for us as a father; thou lovest us as a friend, and thinkest on us perpetually, and are exceeding merciful to all that fear thee; and unto thee, O Lord, we ascribe the praise and honor of our redemption. Amen.—*Bishop Wilbur P. Thirkield.*

Tenth Week—Fourth Day

The history of tithing stewardship makes it clear that tithe paying degenerates when it is forgotten that the purpose is

not so much to get the tithe as the tither. While the Scripture makes it clear that the tithe was necessary to sustain the priesthood and the house of worship, yet the beautiful ritual which was given to the Hebrew and which he was to repeat whenever he came with his first fruits and tithes, makes it appear that *God's primary concern was that his children should remember and acknowledge their dependence upon the Lord, the Giver*. Accordingly, the worshiper would come before the priest, and presenting his tithes and offerings, would say, "I profess this day unto Jehovah my God, that I am come unto the land which Jehovah swore unto our fathers to give us" (Deut. 26. 3).

After the priest had taken what was offered, in equally significant language the worshiper would *acknowledge* his stewardship, by saying:

A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians dealt ill with us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: and we cried unto Jehovah, the God of our fathers, and Jehovah heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression; and Jehovah brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders; and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O Jehovah, hast given me.

—Deut. 26. 5-10.

But another thing should be noticed as taught in the law, namely, that the persons who refused to acknowledge God's sovereignty by the payment of the tithe *were not merely guilty of oversight or neglect, but of actual robbery*. But the offenders themselves were most to be pitied. Obviously, God can get along. But the heart of the Great Steward yearned that those wayward Israelites should know the faith that a child should have in his father. "Prove me now" was the appeal. It sounds very like that later appeal from the lips of Jesus, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, . . . and all these things shall be added unto you."

Instead of asking the question, "Should a Christian observe the statutes of the Old Testament?" can we not approach the matter from another way? Is there any promise in the Old Testament that is denied the new follower of Christ?

Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with the curse; for ye rob, even this whole nation. Bring ye the whole tithe into the store-house, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.—Mal. 3. 8-10.

MEDITATION

The need of the hour is for a church that lovingly pays to God at least the first fruits of all time, energy, and money.
—*Frederick A. Agar.*

To recognize the spiritual content of money, and rescue it from sordidness and greed—this should be the saving evangel of our generation.—*Harvey Reeves Calkins.*

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As to be hated needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."
—*Alexander Pope.*

A PRAYER

O Lord Jesus, who for our sakes didst become poor, we pray thee to protect them that are rich in this world, that they may not be high-minded nor trust in uncertain riches, but in thee, the living God, who givest us richly all things to enjoy. Grant them grace so to use their wealth that they may do good and be rich in good works, ready to distribute and willing to communicate; willing to lay in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Saint Paul—1. Tim. 6. 17.¹

¹*Service and Prayers for Church and Home*, by Bishop Wilbur Patterson Thirkield.

Tenth Week—Fifth Day

Coming now to the New Testament, it seems impossible to discover that there is anything new taught concerning the necessity and methods of the stewardship of possessions. There is the same insistence that worship is insincere which comes empty-handed. There is stressed the importance of systematic and proportionate beneficence. The tithe seems to be indorsed as a bottom standard, and free will gifts are urged just as they were in the Old Testament. *The only difference seems to be that the New Testament exhorts Christians to do as a matter of loving loyalty what, in the old dispensation, was made a matter of law.* A comparison of the following passages of Scripture will indicate this common teaching of the Old and New Testaments. It should be noted, however, that while neither of these references refers specifically to the tithe, there is every reason to believe that both are taking its payment for granted, and therefore are urging the additional gifts according as the worshiper has been prospered:

Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose: in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before Jehovah empty: every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of Jehovah thy God which he hath given thee.

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem.—Deut. 16. 16, 17; 1 Cor. 16. 1-3.

As an illustration of how love, which is the New Testament principle, may begin with the tenth but will not end there, Mr. David McConaughy¹ has prepared the following suggestive outline. It will be an interesting study to discover how every one of the New-Testament references can be matched by another reference to some great soul, who, in

¹Stewardship Department, Northern Presbyterian Church.

the darker days of the old dispensation, did actually climb to the New Testament heights and caught real visions of the taller reaches of loyal stewardship:

- I. "A tenth"—paid by pagans—Gen. 4. 3.
- II. "The tenth"—paid by patriarchs—Gen. 28. 22.
- III. "Tithes"—paid by Israel—(a) Lev. 27. 30;
(b) Deut. 14. 22;
(c) Deut. 14. 28-29.
- IV. "The half"—paid by Zacchæus—Luke 19. 8.
- V. "As prospered"—Paul's rule for free will offerings
—1 Cor. 16. 2.
- VI. "To their power and beyond"—Macedonian converts
—2 Cor. 8. 5.
- VII. "All"—the poor widow—Mark 12. 41.

Each of these New-Testament references is worth careful study. They seem to illustrate what Jesus taught in these words from the Sermon on the Mount:

Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5. 17-19.

MEDITATION

If the tithe is not paid because it is Jewish, then proportionate giving is equally Jewish and should not be followed. The Old and New Testaments can neither be divorced nor put in antagonism; they supplement and complement each other. God's "Law" and God's "Grace" are not opposed.
—*Elijah W. Halford.*

It is astonishing how soon the whole conscience begins to unravel if a single stitch drops; one little sin indulged makes a hole you could put your head through.—*Charles Buxton.*

"In all the little things of life,
Thyself, Lord, may I see;
In little and in great alike
Reveal thy love to me.

"So shall my undivided life
To thee, my God, be given;
And all this earthly course below
Be one dear path to heaven."

—Horatio Bonar.

A PRAYER

O Lord, we love thee, we magnify thee, we worship thee! In loving loyalty we place upon thine altar our all—of time, of talents, and of earthly store, clinging to thy assurance that we love thee because thou hast first loved us. All this day long, we beseech thee, that beside our every path of service thou wilt be our comrade and our strength. So grant us this grace that, being enabled faithfully to fulfill the stewardship of all our days, we may enter into like labors in thy eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ. Amen.—J. Homer Slutz.

Tenth Week—Sixth Day

Did Jesus advocate by example and precept the paying of the tithe as the acknowledgment of stewardship? Looking at our Lord's perfect example in scrupulously keeping the law, *we are led to infer that he not only paid tithes and all other religious dues, but that he probably exceeded what the law required.*

Dr. Lansdell¹ makes the above statement after showing (1) that in Jesus' day tithe paying was not only recognized as a duty but was especially "in the air," owing to the activity of the Pharisees; (2) that the Pharisees, who were ever looking for an opportunity to condemn Jesus, never did accuse him of failure in this regard; (3) that the New Testament portrays Jesus as exceedingly careful in his observance of the law. His insistence upon being baptized by John at the River Jordan is one of the several instances recorded in the Scripture.

¹*The Sacred Tenth*, by Henry Lansdell, D.D., vol. i, chap. xiv and xv.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffereth him.—Matt. 3. 13-16.

But we should do Jesus wrong unless we see that *it was the principle of the tithe that he was advocating*. This means that it was *the principle of acknowledgment* that he saw, back of the tithe. He did not command afresh "as from a New Testament Sinai" the law of the tithe any more than he did the law of the Sabbath or the law against murder or stealing. But just as he sought to lift his disciples into a new atmosphere where they could see the spiritual significance of the Mosaic laws, and the far-reaching and binding principles running through them, this was his purpose in his undoubted indorsement of tithe paying. This was indeed the point of his criticism of the Pharisees. He told them that they did well to pay tithes, but that they did wrong in thinking that the tithe, or any other holy habit, is an end in itself. *The failure of the Pharisees was a failure to perceive the tenth as the acknowledgment of the total surrender of all possessions, and the pledge of a godly life of mercy and justice.* And it may be added that any lesser conception of the tithe than that which Jesus had in mind is bound to end in narrowness and legalism.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel! . . .

And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.—Matt. 23. 23, 24; 5. 40-42.

MEDITATION

Whoso neglects a thing which he suspects he ought to do,

because it seems to him too small a thing, is deceiving himself; it is not too little, but too great for him, that he doeth it not.—*E. B. Pusey.*

We do not give God a *fraction* of that which we possess, but we loyally *acknowledge* God's sovereignty over the whole.
—*Harris Franklin Rall.*

"The roses red upon my neighbor's vine
Are owned by him, but they are also mine.
His was the cost, and his the labor too,
But mine as well as his the joy their loveliness to view.

"They bloom for me, and are for me as fair,
As for the man who gives them all his care.
Thus I am rich, because a good man grew
A rose-clad vine for all his neighbors' view.

"I know from this that others plant for me,
And what they own, my joy may also be,
So why be selfish, when so much that's fine
Is grown for you upon your neighbors' vine?"
—*Abraham Gruber.*

A PRAYER

O Lord Jesus, our Divine Saviour, teach us now and always to understand that blessed is the man who endureth prosperity; whose riches turn neither his head nor his heart; who "seeketh not his own" to the neglect of his neighbor; who blesseth the world with his substance; for at the last he will receive the "Well done" of the faithful steward of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Tenth Week—Seventh Day

Dr. John Henry Jowett tells of a call on a Christian cobbler who cobbled in his little shop by the sea. The preacher sat down by the work-bench and watched the man at his work, and listened to the steady beat of the pegging hammer. Little by little the monotony of the work, the narrowness of the room, and the light from only one window brought a spirit of depression over the watcher, and he cried at length, "Man, don't you ever get tired of this narrow life?" The old

cobbler drew himself up to his full height, brushing the litter from his apron, and reached out his hand and opened the door, saying, "Whenever I feel like that, Pastor, I open this door"; and the preacher looked out of that door on an ever-widening sea. He said, "Immediately that little room was glorified by the vastness of its relationships—to fields and skies and the rolling sea—and to the Creator of them all."

It will be like this with the tithe—a little thing in itself, and, if kept apart from its large and holy relationships, a dwarfing thing. *But when the tithe is used as God commanded it to be used—as the door into the larger life of stewardship*—it not only becomes the much-needed "sinews of war," but also the witness of our faith and the pledge of our allegiance to the blessed God. Moreover, through the open door of the tithe Christ floods every chamber of the soul, and shows us how to take the common things of life and make them beautiful. To quote Bishop Edwin H. Hughes: "Few things could happen so far-reaching and high-reaching in the life of the church as the recruiting of an army of tithers, who, declining to be Pharisees, and refusing to be bound by any mere law, still use the tithe in giving to the work of God as a schoolmaster to lead them to Christ. After such an army the windows of heaven would not remain shut; and the assured blessing would come from God." Surely the fear of the Old-Testament legalism has played havoc with us, even to the blinding of eyes to that eternal relationship which Jesus said existed between the law and the gospel: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5. 18).

Certainly, God still requires—and primarily for the sake of those who love him—a material acknowledgment of his sovereign ownership. What Christian will desire to bring a smaller proportion than did the Jew? As Dr. J. Campbell White says, "The strongest passage in the Bible on the enforcement of the tithe does not say anything directly about tithing, but it states a principle which applies to all the law of God."

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was

weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. . . .

Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is *due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.—Rom. 8. 1-4; 13. 7-9.

MEDITATION

In regard to money as well as to time, there is great advantage in its methodical use. Especially is it wise to dedicate a certain portion of our means to purposes of charity and religion, and this is more easily begun in youth than in after life. The greatest advantage of making a little fund of this kind is that when we are asked to give, the competition is not between *self* on the one hand and charity on the other, but between the different purposes of religion and charity with one another, among which we ought to make the most careful choice. It is desirable that the fund thus devoted should *not be less than one tenth of our means*; and it tends to bring a blessing on the rest.—*William Gladstone.*

“And, as the path of duty is made plain,
May grace be given that I may walk therein,
Not like the hireling, for his selfish gain,
With backward glances and reluctant tread,
Making a merit of his coward dread,
But cheerfully, in the light around me thrown,
Walking as one to pleasant service led;
Doing God’s will as if it were my own,
Yet trusting not in mine, but in his strength alone!”
—*John G. Whittier.*

A PRAYER

O Eternal God, the very God of peace and of all consolation, which brought us again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep through the everlasting

covenant, make us fruitful in all good works to do thy will, and work in us that which is acceptable in thy sight; sanctify us throughout, and keep our whole spirit, soul and body faultless unto the coming of thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Thou art faithful, O Father, who hast promised this, who also shalt bring it to pass; to thee, therefore, be given everlasting praise, honor and glory. Amen.—The writer of the Epistles to the Hebrews, Heb. 13. 20.

OUTLINE—TENTH WEEK. STEWARDSHIP AND THE TITHE

1. Introductory: The Beginning of Stewardship.
2. First Day: Offerings and Worship.
3. Second Day: The Tithe and Acknowledgment.
4. Third Day: Tithes and Offerings.
5. Fourth Day: The Tithe and the Tither.
6. Fifth Day: Tithing in the New Testament.
7. Sixth Day: Jesus and Tithing.
8. Seventh Day: The Door to Larger Life.

QUESTIONS

1. *a.* Do you tithe your income for the Kingdom? Why?
b. Does tithing pay? Pay whom? and what?
c. How may one begin the practice of Christian stewardship?
d. How do you know that you have accepted any principle of living? If it makes no difference in conduct and spirit, has it been accepted?
e. What does the tithe signify? Is it an end in itself? What part of stewardship?
f. Have you found the principle of tithing taught in the Bible? practiced by the saints of old? preached by your pastor?
g. When and where did tithing begin? When does stewardship begin?
2. *a.* What is the relation of tithing stewardship to worship? Is the tithe ever mere tribute or tax?
b. How generally is worship in the Scriptures accompanied by the offering of material possessions? Cite instances.
c. Where did Abraham learn tithing?
3. *a.* Why cannot a Christian steward *give* to God?
b. Why must ownership be acknowledged?
c. What portion of your possessions belongs to God?

4. *a.* Is the tithe to be the maximum of one's paying for the support of the Kingdom? the minimum?
- b.* How, in modern times, does tithing stewardship bring the worshiper into contact with God? Is God consciously present?
5. *a.* For what purposes was the tithe used among the Jews?
- b.* Of what is paying the tithe an acknowledgment?
- c.* How does paying tithes benefit the tither?
- d.* What promises in the Old Testament are withdrawn in the New Testament?
- e.* What are the blessings promised in Mal. 3. 8-10?
6. *a.* What is the compulsion upon the Christian steward, law or love? legal or loyal?
7. *a.* What is Jesus' attitude toward tithing?
- b.* What is the principle of the tithe?
8. *a.* How large is your world? your life? your stewardship?
- b.* Is the tithe for the sake of the money, or for the sake of the tithe?

EXERCISES

1. How would you raise the necessary money for the work of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ?
2. What other objects must be considered, besides getting the money? What is their order of importance?
3. List the liberal persons, who began with the tithe, among your own acquaintances? Are they spiritually minded?
4. What are the real difficulties in the way of tithing?
5. Can a compulsory tithe be religious or have spiritual value?
6. Why may nontithers be called "robbers"?
7. Does the Christian steward operate as a slave? a servant? a partner? a son? Can he conclude his duty by paying a tithe?
8. How may we segregate any part of our lives—tithing, stewardship, prayer, work, personal relations with others—from religious or everyday living, and retain abundant life? To what part of the Kingdom have we no relation? To what part of life is the Kingdom unrelated?

INDEX

- Abbott, Lyman, quoted, 118
- Abraham, friend and steward, 40
- Achan, judged for covetousness, 135, 145
- Acknowledging God in Business, 190
- Acknowledgment, The tithe an, 205
- Africa, divided by covetous nations, 175
- African missionary's story, 116
- Agar, Frederick A., quoted, 211
- Albright, Mary E., poem quoted, 21
- Alford, Dean Henry, prayer quoted, 41
- Altruism, sometimes weakening, 79
- Ambition, result of both stewardship and covetousness, 140
- Ambrose, prayer quoted, 122
- America, moved by spasms of benevolence, 137
- "American Tithers," quoted, 200
- Ananias and Sapphira, story, 140
- Apostasy, followed recognition by Rome, 153
- Aristotle, quoted, 23
- Aristotelianism, 17, 23
- Arnold, Matthew, quoted, 34
- Arthur, William, quoted, 121
- Assurance that Jesus is the Christ, 105
- Attitude of Christian toward Jesus, 82
- Augustine, Saint, prayer quoted, 128
- Babson, Roger W., quoted, 131, 148, 157, 160, 176, 177, 179, 190, 197
- Bacon, quoted, 174
- Bartlett, Frank, quoted, 154, 192
- Bashford, James W., quoted, 126
- Beard, Theresa Virginia, poem quoted, 74
- Beecher, Henry Ward, quoted, 41
- Beginning of Stewardship, 197
- Benevolence, cannot meet life needs, 74; spasmodic, 137; Motive to work, 185
- Bennett, R. H., quoted, 144
- Bernard, Saint, prayer quoted, 141
- Best, Susie M., poem, 137
- Bible quoted, (See list, page 236)
- Bible, each generation makes new discoveries in, 15
- Birney, L. J., prayer quoted, 183
- Bolton, Sarah Knowles, poem quoted, 23
- Bonar, Horatio, poem quoted, 214
- Bourdillon, Francis Wm., poem quoted, 148
- Bradley, J. W., story by, 24
- Brainerd, David, quoted, 44
- Brooks, Phillips, story of conversion, 21; visited Helen Keller, 52; unselfish seeker, 140; quoted, 78, 107, 167
- Brotherhood, spiritual and material, 152; interfered with by business, 184; conditions that prevent, 177
- Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, quoted, 26
- Browning, Robert, poem quoted, 17, 94, 153
- Bryant, Anna Burnham, poem quoted, 106
- Bryant, Wm. Cullen, poem quoted, 144

INDEX

- Burnet, Dana, poem quoted, 187
 Burton, Richard, poem quoted, 104
 Bushnell, Horace, quoted, 151
 Business, and sin, 180; its purpose, 181; and Golden Rule, 187; "to glory of God and welfare of worker," 174; in obedience to God, 189
 Business causing war, 186
 Business of life, 76
 "Business Man and His Overflow," quoted, 76
 Business Man, quits business, story, 133
 Business Men, Christian, Dedication to, 5; Motives of change, 15; serve God, 165; responsible for industrial reform, 181; Hard to be unselfish, 183
 Business preventing brotherhood, 184
 Business, stewardship of emphasized, 9; Big, social and public, 15
 Business and Stewardship, 174
 Business vs. Worker, 191
 Buxton, Charles, quoted, 213
 Cain, his sin, 203
 Calkins, Harvey Reeves, quoted, 153, 211
 Calvary, consummation of Stewardship, 47
 Candy, and the Church, 145
 Capital, wrong to disparage, 156; wrong to love, 158; not to blame entirely for industrial injustice, 176
 Capital vs. Labor, Stewardship settles, 9
 Capitalism wrong, 161
 "Captain of My Soul," poem quoted, 17
 Carlyle, Thomas, quoted, 47, 185
 Carnegie, Andrew and his wealth, 162
 Carruth, William Herbert, poem quoted, 37
 Cavell, Edith, quoted, 77
 Chaplain, would live for Jesus, 73
 Charles, Elizabeth, poem quoted, 189
 Chesterton, G. K., quoted, 80, 132
 Child of God, a steward, 62
 Child's question, 15
 Chinaman, and physician, story, 103
 Chinese famine story, 24
 Christ, no other way, 85; claims whole life, 180
 Christian and pagan philosophy compared, 17, 18
 Christian Business Men, Dedication to, 5; conduct ruthless business, 175
 Christianity, Romance of, 93; self-destroying, 131; not tried because difficult, 132; defeated by covetousness, 145; as established religion, 153; cannot succeed unless humanity be redeemed, 174; must conquer industry, 174
 Christianizing Industry, 174
 Christianizing Property, 151
 Christians, can find philosophy of life, 16; brother's keeper, 59; practiced stewardship first three centuries, 153
 Chrysostom, quoted, 206
 Church, growth dangerous, 114; covetousness defeats, 145; greatest task of the, Christianizing property, 151; must solve industrial problems, 176; its business to apply stewardship to industry, 179; suffering from early apostasy, 180
 Church Fathers, placed prayer first, 114; quoted, 143, 154
 Cincinnati Clothing Co. practices Golden Rule, 180, 188
 Citizenship, stewardship of, 180

INDEX

- Civilization and New Testament, 15
- Cleghorn, Sarah G., poem quoted, 186
- Clement, quoted, 154
- Cobbler, story of enlargement, 216
- Colored layman who tithed, story, 201
- Communion with God, Livingstone's, 29; indispensable to Christian steward, 118; Great Commission at center of, 118
- Communism, not practiced at Pentecost, 152; and property, 161
- Community, Individual and, 154
- Community, the source of wealth, 162; superior to private property, 164; must be considered in industry, 192
- Conductor on railway, and Kingdom work, 77
- Confession, of covetousness, 138
- Conscience, silenced by covetousness, 141; unravels, 213
- Consecration, 46; of property, 140; tithe an earnest of, 198
- Constantine becomes Christian, 153
- Conversion to Righteousness, 102
- Conviction, overcomes ridicule, 206
- Coolidge, Susan, poem quoted, 127
- Covetous, who are, 136; "idiots," 144
- Covetousness, is idolatry, 131; blights nations, 132, 136; cannot be defined, 135; enemy of Jesus' philosophy of stewardship, 135; is misleading, 138; seldom confessed, 138; brings judgment, 139; cultivates ambition, 140; followed by other vices, 140; purposes affected by, 141; and day of judgment, 143; distorts judgment, 145; obstacle to salvation, 147
- Covetousness, peril to stewardship, 131
- Cranston, Bishop Earl, quoted, 35, 37, 39, 48, 146
- Crawford, Dan, quoted, 86
- Creation, God's Stewardship, 36, 37; basis of God's ownership, 83
- Davis, Robert, quoted, 25
- Dawson, Eric, poem quoted, 80
- Day of Reckoning, The, 143
- Democracy, great event of 18th century, 151
- Depending on God, 126
- Dickinson, Emily, poem quoted, 163
- Discipleship and Possessions, 166
- Discoveries in Bible, each generation makes, 15
- Discovery, great event of 16th Century, 151
- Divine Leadership, 106
- Dodge, Wm. E., a steward, 75
- Door to Larger Life, tithing, 216
- Drummond, Henry, quoted, 23, 104
- Duffield, Samuel W., poem quoted, 115
- Duke, James B., story of, 156
- Duty, before preferment, 43; eternal, 86; value of, 87
- Dwight, John Sullivan, poem quoted, 78
- 'Dynamite in New Testament, 15
- Eastman, George, story of, 160
- Eastman, Max, poem quoted, 205
- Eating, superfluous, 160
- "Economic Imperialism," quoted, 175
- Edward VI, Prayer Book of, quoted, 157
- Elliott, Charlotte, poem quoted, 76

INDEX

- Elliott, Wm. J., quoted, 209
 Emergency of Christianity, 169
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, quoted, 56
 Employer, relation to employee, solved by stewardship, 9
 Epicureanism, 16, 18
 Esther, Queen, a steward of life, 73; challenged, 98
 Events, Great, of five modern centuries, 151
 Evolution did not produce Jesus Christ, 84
 Experience, pressure of God's life on ours, 107

 Faber, Frederick W., poem quoted, 43
 Faith, Salvation by, and Stewardship, 75
 Faithfulness, 28
 Far East, follows West to war, 175
 Farmingham, Marianne, poem quoted, 63
 Fathers of Church placed prayer first, 114
 Fatherhood of God, 20
 Faulkner, John Alfred, preserves record, 117
 Fear, caused by riches, 147
 Fellowship, with God, 98; with heroes of past, 98
 Fellowship of Stewardship, 57
 Fénelon François de la Mothe, prayer quoted, 65
 First Test of Stewardship, 168
 Five great modern events, 151
 "Five Great Philosophies of Life," by Wm. DeWitt Hyde, quoted, 16
 Forbes, B. C., quoted, 156
 Fosdick, Harry Emerson, quoted, 175
 Foss, Sam Walter, poem quoted, 36

 Free will more important than success, 40
 Freedom political, great event of 19th Century, 151
 Friendship with God, 88
 "Fundamentals of Prosperity," quoted, 177
 Future, The Steward's, 64

 Garden of Eden, Stewardship in, 37; God's sovereignty challenged in, 37
 Garrison, Theodosia, quoted, 59
 Gelasian Sacramentary, prayer quoted, 43
 Generosity, by-product of war, 76
 Gillies, Andrew, quoted, 84
 Girl carrying baby, story, 82
 Girl would be a missionary, story, 88
 Girls lured, 77
 Gladstone, Wm. E., quoted, 218
 God the Father, 37; seeks his children, 39, 43, 45, 62
 God, character of, 16; Fatherhood of, 20; the owner of life, 21; wants us to like our jobs, 25; is social, 36; invests his all, 37; separation from in Eden, 38; speaks through Abraham, 40; through Moses, 42; presence felt, 52; relation to steward, 57; friendship to, 88; resources for man, 94; wants perfect men and world, 94; fellowship with, 98; first element of success, 100; seeks men, 100; his supreme appeal, Jesus, 100; response to prayer, 116; communion with, necessary, 118; to have a pull with, 122; will not go over head of steward, 123; depending on, 126; property subject to, 164; served by in all useful work, 165; business to glory of, 174; acknowledging in business, 190

INDEX

- God's eyes, seeing through, 127
 God's message, stewardship, 73
 God's ownership, basis of stewardship, 35; challenged in Eden, 37; must be acknowledged, 56; fundamental principle of stewardship, 76; based on creation and redemption, 83; ignored by covetous, 143; accepted at Pentecost, 150; compromised as Rome accepted Christianity, 153; or revolution, 155
 God's Philosophy revealed by Jesus, 16
 God's Plans, 16, 19, 20, 23; for world redemption, 41
 God's Presence, and Freedom, 52; and the tithe acknowledgment, 53
 God's Stewardship, 34; God ruled by, 34; creation an act of, 36; in Garden, 37; a supreme venture, 37; salvaging men is, 39; social responsibility is, 41; refusal of, 43; supreme example of, 45; Pentecost, fulfillment of, 47; differs from ours, 55
 God's word for this generation, stewardship, 15
 Golden Rule, used by clothing manufacturer, 180; Business and the, 187; may be practiced alone, 188
 Goldsmith, Oliver, poem quoted, 131
 Good Samaritan, Parable of, 55
 Gore, Bishop Charles, quoted, 153, 162, 163
 "Gospel for a Working World, The," quoted, 167
 Gratitude, a stewardship grace, 45
 Great Commission, center of communion, 118
 Great War, for profits, 175
 Greaves, J. P., quoted, 19
 Gruber, Abraham, poem quoted, 216
 Guest, Edgar A., poem quoted, 139
 Guild of Saint Paul, prayer quoted, 108
 Guiney, Louise Imogen, poem quoted, 99
 Gunsaulus, Frank W., quoted, 96
 Halford, Colonel E. W., quoted, 63, 213
 Hall, Wm. Phillips, quoted, 101
 Hamilton, Bishop, quoted, 114
 Hankey, Donald, quoted, 126
 Happiness, in Jesus' philosophy, 25; general happiness depends on stewardship, 25; sharing key to, 104; depends much on others, 187
 Hartley, Wm. B., story of, 200
 Hartman, L. O., quoted, 158
 Havergal, Frances Ridley, poem quoted, 122
 Headland, Isaac T., quoted, 103
 Hebrew nation refuses stewardship, 43; political decay follows, 43; reminded of by prophets and Jesus, 57
 Henderson, Bishop Theodore S., quoted, 140
 Henley, W. E., poem quoted, 17
 Henry VIII, Statutes 27, quoted, 202
 Heresy, a stupid, and Prayer, 112
 Hermit, not a Christian steward, 36
 Heroic service, 78
 Heroism in Heat and Cold, 86
 Hillis, Newell Dwight, quoted, 52
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, poem quoted, 57
 Holy Spirit, reign began at Pentecost, 47; Helen Keller felt presence of, 52; inspires steward, 95, 96; waits on church, 97; personal leader, 106;

INDEX

- secured through prayer, 120;
limited by men, 123
- Hoover, Herbert, quoted, 60;
opinion quoted, 160
- Horder, W. Garrett, quoted, 26
- How, Bishop Walsham, prayer
quoted, 84
- Howard, Mr. Clinton, quoted, 151
- Hyde, William DeWitt, quoted,
16, 18, 24, 62, 79
- Idolatry, Covetousness is, Intro-
duction, 131
- "I go to prove my soul," 17
- "I know, Lord, thou hast sent
him," 19
- Immigrants, effect of industry on,
167
- Immortality, conditioned, 21
- Indian, Prayer Cycle, prayer
quoted, 21; missionary letter,
60
- Individual, and community, 164
- Individual conversions key to
Christian success, 102
- Industrial problems solved by
stewardship, 9
- Industry, should produce men,
then money, 166; uses up men,
167, Christianizing of, 174;
suffers from pagan property
ideas, 174; reform of, rests on
Church, 181; groups of, claim
Jesus, 186
- Innes, George, quoted, 153, 190
- Intercessory prayer, Brainerd's
story of, 44; a duty, 124
- International relations, and stew-
ardship, 15
- Inventiveness stimulated by love,
103
- Investing for Another, 55
- Irwin, Will, quoted, 175
- Jacks, L. P., quoted, 185
- Jenks, Benjamin, poem quoted,
89; prayer quoted, 138
- Jesus and Tithing, 214
- Jesus' Philosophy of Life, 15; is
stewardship, 15; is God's phil-
osophy, 16; a climax of all phil-
osophies, 16; is livable, 18; in-
cludes others, 20; includes God,
21; love in, 23; compassion
most conspicuous feature of,
23; happiness in, 25; prayer in,
27; centers on stewardship,
34; faithfulness the crown of,
128; covetousness, enemy of, 135
- Jesus' views revolutionary, 18;
obedient to God, 22; sympathy
for people, 23; demands heroic
service, 78; Christ not product
of evolution, 84; his words re-
called at Pentecost, 96; assur-
ance he is the Christ, 105;
prayed daily, 112; teaching of,
not observed, 132; would favor
budget system, 160; paid tithes,
214
- Jews paid many tithes, 206, 207
- John the Baptist, advises eco-
nomic reform, 181
- Jones, Thos. S., Jr., poem quoted,
161
- Jowett, J. H., quoted, 40, 95, 115,
125, 143, 216
- Joy, James R., quoted, 180
- Judgment, Day of, 143; deter-
mined by use of money, 168
- Keller, Helen, visited by Phillips
Brooks, story, 52
- Kent, Henry S., poem quoted,
185
- Kháyyám, Omar, poem quoted, 16,
96
- Kilmer, Joyce, poem quoted, 82,
83
- Kimball, Harriet McEwen, poem
quoted, 169
- Kindness, its source, 84
- King, Professor, quoted, 178
- Kingdom loses if capital or labor

INDEX

- win, 178; must be first, 182; should be first, 209
- Kingsley, Charles, quoted, 87, 191
- Knox, John, prayer quoted, 101
- Kodak, story of thrift, 160
- Labor, not entirely to blame for industrial distress, 176
- Labor vs. Capital, settled by stewardship, 9
- Lady who prayed and paid, story, 141
- Lanier, Sidney, poem quoted, 27
- Lansdell, Henry, quoted, 202, 204, 214
- Law of stewardship, 35; based on loyalty, 62
- Layman, Paul a, 77
- Learning to pray, 124
- Legalism hinders stewardship, 201
- Letts, Miss W. M., poem quoted, 164
- Lewis, Lena Blinn, poem quoted, 48
- Life Insurance, and church, 145
- Life, Philosophy of, Jesus' 9; sought by all, 15; Christian can find, 16; Pagan fails to find, 16
- Life, Stewardship of, 73; business of, 76; high cost of, 81; the Door to Larger, 216
- Life Service, Jeremy Taylor, quoted, 21
- Lincoln, Abraham, quoted, 64
- Lindsay, Vachel, poem quoted, 177
- Livingstone, David, quoted, 29
- Loneliness of moral combat, 29; not God's intention, 36
- Love, to God, how shown, 23; to man, story, 45; Keynote of Creation, 48; basis of stewardship, 62; service, friendship, 88; stimulates inventiveness, 103; for possessions, wicked, 158; motive of brotherhood, 184
- Loving attitude to Jesus, 82
- Loveman, Robert, poem quoted, 89
- Lowell, James Russell, quoted, 15; poem quoted, 146, 157
- Loyalty, and the Tithe, 57, 62; and stewardship, 77; in the New Testament, 212
- Loyola, Ignatius de, prayer quoted, 82
- Luther, Martin, quoted, 127
- Luxury, invites decay, 39; condemned by Hoover, 60; not promised, 64; costs more than religion and education, 137; its place, 146; Kingdom should precede, 209
- Mahood, J. H., quoted, 102, 106
- Mammon misleads, 147
- Man, is social, 36; not owner, but steward, 37; has infinite possibilities, 45; being made in God's image, 45; self-made sometimes shortsighted, 55; may trust God and do right, 64; worth of, 65; salvation of, 67; always being made like God, 93; to be perfect in perfect world, 94; must like God to enjoy heaven, 102; man led by, 106; blighted by covetousness, 131; property made for, 167; indicates interests by use of money, 168; common, victim of industrial injustice, 177; must join community life, 192
- Manhood, object of business, 166
- Manna, illustrates private property limits, 162
- Manning, H. E., quoted, 189
- Markham, Edwin, poem quoted, 189, 192
- Martineau, James, prayer quoted, 78
- Material stewardship and the Kingdom, 65

INDEX

- Matheson, George, poem quoted, 26, 41; prayer quoted, 28
- McCarthy, Dennis, poem quoted, 191
- McConaughy, David, quoted, 66, 192, 212
- McCrea, John, quoted, 58
- McKinley, Wm., quoted, 44
- Men, or money, story, 167
- Meredith, Owen, quoted, 29
- Merriam, George S., quoted, 187
- Mill, John Stuart, quoted, 206
- Miller, George, testimony concerning prayer, 120
- Miller, Joachin, poem quoted, 159
- Mills, Elliott, E., poem quoted, 93
- Mine, cave-in, at Scranton, 188
- Ministry, overwrought, 81
- Misers, not wanted, 35
- Misery, from greed for profits, 174; from others, 187
- Missionary, Letter from India, 116, 117
- Money, a test of stewardship, 65; "Liquid Personality," 66; reveals character, 66; needed in world redemption, 123; usurps God's place, 147; is danger, 147; power, conversion of, last great revival, 151; love of, wicked, 158; how much may a Christian possess? 161; not primary object of industry, 166; indicates interest, 168; not to be first, 181; how to use, 218
- Money, Love of, 158
- Montgomery, James, poem quoted, 111
- Moral, combat lonely, 29; responsibility, 42
- Morgan, Angela, poem quoted, 193
- Morning Watch, needed, 127
- Mother's Prayer Garret, a story, 120; Mother and wayward son, 199
- Motive, in service, 82
- Mott, John R., quoted, 22
- "My Brother's Keeper," 59
- Napoleon, self-seeker, 140
- Nash, quoted, 180
- Nash Clothing Co., story, 180, 188
- Nations, Stewardship of, 58; blighted by covetousness, 131; danger to, 136
- Necessities are promised, 64
- Neighbor, Who is my, 59
- New Testament, Dynamite in, 15; and civilization, 15; principle of stewardship underlies, 9; reveals passion of Great Commission, 118; covetousness contrary to, 132; calls covetous "idiot," 144; agrees with Old Testament, 213
- New Testament, Tithing in, 212
- "Next War, The," quoted, 175
- Obedience, to Divine Will, 19; a pleasure, 25; counsels, 26; a safeguard, 28; refused in Eden, 38; refused by Hebrews, 43; all our business may be, 189
- Obligation of Stewardship, to God the Creator, 55; to our fathers, 57
- Offerings, and worship, 203; Tithes and, 207
- Old Testament, principle of stewardship underlies, 9; emphasizes stewardship of Divine resources, 124
- Omar Khāyyām, quoted, 16, 96
- Outline of argument of "The Message of Stewardship," 9
- Ownership, God's never relinquished, 35; man's questioned, 37; God's basis of stewardship, 74; based on creation and redemption, 83; ignored by covetous, 143

INDEX

- Pagan and Christian Philosophy compared, 17, 25
- Pagan, ideas of property grip church, 151; property remains, 155
- Pagan Philosophy fails, 16; compared with Christian, 17; highest reach, 23
- Pain, problem of, solved by stewardship, 26
- Palmer, quoted, 46
- Parables with Stewardship teaching, 53, 58, 62
- "Paradise for the Christian Soul," prayer quoted, 44
- Parenthood, Stewardship of, 37
- Pastor Robinson, quoted, 15
- Patriotism, based on stewardship, 57; depends on stewardship, 76
- Paul, a layman, 77; "Wandering Ulysses-like," 93
- Peck, George C., quoted, 140, 199
- Pentecost, fulfills divine stewardship, 47; transformed Paul and Peter, 93; climax of God's stewardship, 94; brought vision and power, 94; recalls Jesus' sayings, 96; to be repeated, 99; and world reconstruction, 100; assures that Jesus is the Christ, 105; prayer prepares for, 111; and stewardship of property, 151; communism not practiced at, 152
- Pentecost, and Stewardship, 93
- Peril to Stewardship, 131
- Personal God peculiar to Christianity, 17
- Personal Power released, 122
- Personality, Supreme, 67; superior to property, 166
- "Peter, Preaching of," quoted, 154
- Phelps, Wm. H., quoted, 81
- Philanthropist, not a steward, 75
- "Philosophies, Five Great, of Life" by Hyde, quoted, 16, 18, 24, 62, 79
- Philosophy, Jesus', of Life, 15; sought as explanation of life, 15; Christian may find, 16; Paganism fails to find, 16; is livable, 18; includes others, 20; includes God, 21; love in, 23; happiness in, 25; prayer in, 27; faithfulness in, 28
- Philosophy must be livable, 18
- Pierson, Arthur T., quoted, 99
- Pity pitiful, 80
- Place of Prayer, Introductory, 122
- Place, depends on service, 43
- Plans, God's, 16, 19, 20, 23
- Plato, sympathy limited, 23
- Platonism, 17
- Pleasure, problem of, solved by stewardship, 25
- Poems, quoted. (See list, page 238)
- Polycarp, prayer quoted, 159
- Poor Men, covetous, 136
- Pope, Alexander, poem quoted, 211
- Porter, David R., prayer quoted, 61, 103, 127, 186
- Possessions, teach trust in God, 57; a temptation, 65; for community good, 103; not evil, 156; for service or power? 161; Discipleship and, 166
- Poteat, Edwin M., quoted, 136, 138, 147, 162, 185
- Pounds, Jessie Brown, poem quoted, 101
- Power, and vision, 93; prayer releases and directs, 112; personality released, 123; is danger, 148, of money must be Christianized, 151; if possessions held for, is sinister, 161
- Practical understanding, 103
- Pray, for life, 78; learning to, 124
- Prayer Book of Edward VI, quoted, 157
- Prayer, Stewardship and, 111

INDEX

- Prayer, necessary, 27; intercessory described, 44; place of, 111; prepares for Pentecost, 111; Stewardship and, 111; new evaluation of at Pentecost, 111; needed, 112; in primitive church, 114; great gift from God, 115; God's response to, 116; great commission at center of, 118; George Muller's testimony, 120; unlocks door, 120; secures the Holy Spirit, 121; a duty, 124; acknowledgment of stewardship, 124; demands sacrifice, 125
- Prayer, Indian Cycle, quoted, 21
- Prayer of Seneca, 20
- "Preaching of Peter," quoted, 154
- Presence of God realized, 107
- Primitive Church in Prayer, 114
- Principle of Stewardship underlies message of Old and New Testament, 9
- Private property, sanctioned, 162; story of manna shows limits of, 162; secondary to human welfare, 164
- Problems, Industrial, solved by stewardship, 9
- Prodigal Son, Parable of, 55, 62
- Profits, not first in industry, 166; greed for, chief source of misery, 174; world peril, 174; not to be first, 182; prevents brotherhood, if put first, 184
- Prohibition, great event of 20th century, 151
- "Property, Its Duties and Its Rights," quoted, 154, 162, 180
- Property, can bless or curse, 131; result of godliness, 131; sensitive, 140; must be surrendered, 141; Stewardship and, 151; Christianizing, church's greatest task, 151; gripped by pagan ideas, 151; stewardship of at Pentecost, 151; wrong to love, 158; private, sanctioned, 161; use, the limit on, 162; community superior to, 164; subject to God's ownership, 165; secondary to personality, 166; for man, 167; sought by both capital and labor, 176
- Prophets, were stewards of divine resources, 124
- Prosperity, a result of godliness, 131
- Providence, intelligent and loving, 20
- Purpose, of this book, 9; affected by covetousness, 143; of business, 182
- Pusey, E. B., prayer quoted, 106, 216
- Rall, Harris F., quoted, 177, 215
- Rauschenbusch, Walter, prayer quoted, 182
- Ray, Maude Louise, poem quoted, 183
- Reckoning, Day of, 143
- Redemption, of world, God's plan, 41; basis of God's ownership, 184
- Reed, Andrew, poem quoted, 94
- Reese, Lizette Woodworth, poem quoted, 39
- Reformation, great event of 17th Century, 151
- Relation, to God, 80
- Religion, joyless, 88
- Repentance and rebirth, conditions to heaven, 102
- Resources, found through prayer, 114, 122; spiritual and material, administered by men, 123
- Responsibility realized, 98
- Revolution, or God's ownership, 155
- Revolutionary views of Jesus, 18
- Rice, Cale Young, quoted, 19
- Riches, may be a disgrace, 53; a peril, 147; not evil in them-

INDEX

- selves, 156; loved by capitalist and laborer, 176
 Rich farmer, The story of, 144
 Rich Men, lost through covetousness, 147; not the only covetous ones, 136; owe, because rich, 143; must accept stewardship, 143; fearful, 147; owe service, 154
 Robbers, quarrel, 185
 Robbing God, 143, 210
 Robert II, of France, poem quoted, 47
 Robinson, Forbes, quoted, 124
 Robinson, Pastor, quoted, 15
 Roman Breviary, prayer quoted, 120, 126, 148
 Roman Church and pagan property, 155
 Romance of Christianity, 93
 Rossetti, Christina G., poem quoted, 28, 207; prayer quoted, 146, 163
 Rubaiyat of Omar Khāyyām, quoted, 16
 Rule, Golden, and business, 180, 187, 188
 Ruskin, John, quoted, 19, 28, 58, 81, 138
 Saadi, poem quoted, 141
 "Sacred Tenth, The," quoted, 202, 214
 Sacrifice, self, 46; demanded, 79; in prayer, 125; understood by few, 137; what it is, 143
 Saint Bernard, Prayer, quoted, 141
 Salvation by faith, 75
 "Saved to serve" needs interpretation, 74
 Saving rich men, 147
 Saylor, James L., quoted, 200
 Scotchman, hard business man, story, 133; rich, story of, 147
 Scott, Captain, quoted, 86
 Scripture. (See list, page 236)
 Secret of success, 100, 104
 Seeger, Alan, poem quoted, 165
 Self-made man shortsighted, 55
 Seneca, Stoic, prayer quoted, 20
 "Service and Prayer for Church and Home," quoted, 211
 Service, proves love, 23; the key to preferment, 44; inadequate without stewardship, 73; rescued from commercialism by stewardship, 73; heroic, 78; importance of right motive in, 82; for spiritual regeneration, 84; love indispensable in, 89; possessions held for, is right, 161
 Service, Robert, poem quoted, 182
 Shaw, George Bernard, quoted, 85
 Sin, its cure, 102; not to pray, 113, 124; covetousness is door to, 138; and business, 180; unfinished business, 180
 "Sin we're afraid to mention," quoted, 134-5
 Slutz, J. Homer, prayer quoted, 187, 214
 Smith, Wm. Austin, quoted, 177, 179
 Social Consciousness Broadened, 103
 Song, for fixed faith, 86
 Sonship and Stewardship, 61
 South America, why behind North America, a story, 132
 Speer, Robert E., quoted, 97, 113, 115, 127
 Spiritual regeneration, object of service, 84; spiritual value of stewardship message, 9; results of tithing, 197, 198
 Spurgeon, quoted, 102
 Statutes 27, Henry VIII, 202
 Steinmetz, Martha Bird, quoted, 42; prayer quoted, 88, 189
 Stennett, Samuel, poem quoted, 34
 Stern, quoted, 205

- Stetson, Charlotte Perkins, poem quoted, 65
- Stevenson, Robert L., quoted, 22, 89, 100, 193
- Steward, Future of, 64; all are, 55; must be faithful, 56; more than a philanthropist, 74; serves in name of Lord, 75; Wm. E. Dodge, a, 75; saved by faith, 75; represents God, 80; God's personal agent, 98; prays, 111, must keep himself fit for Master's business, 118; God will not supersede, 123; word defined, 174
- Stewardship, God's word for this generation, 15, 53; Jesus' Philosophy of Life, 15; word used in periodicals and books, 15; and international relations, 15; consummates all philosophies, 17; happiness depends on, 25; prayer in, 27; faithfulness crown of, 28; God ruled by, 34; God's, 34; law of, 35; demonstrated by God, 37; in Eden, 37; of parenthood, 37; is voluntary, 39; of time, 42; refused by Hebrews, 43; vagueness dissipated, 52; the word, why used? 52; vital, 54; other words not synonymous, 54; covers whole relation of man to God, 54; expresses friendly and responsible relations, 54; center of Jesus' philosophy of Life, 55; taught in parables, 55; ours differs from God's, 55; obligation of, 55; fellowship of, 57; of nations, 58; world-need for, 59; and sonship, 61; fulfillment of life, 62; money a test of, 65; saving life the goal of, 67; material, and the Kingdom, 67; superior to mere service, 73; of life, 73; more than philanthropy, 75; God's ownership fundamental to, 76; main business of life, 76; principles of, underlie message of Old and New Testaments, 9; Christian success depends on, 102; practice solves industrial problem, 9; prayer, part of, 111; regular, of prayer, 118; of prayer leads to dependence on God, 126; necessary to rich, 147, 148; at Pentecost, 152; practiced first three centuries, 153; includes saving and spending, 160; of citizenship, 164; first test of, 168; business and, 174; word defined, 174; solution of industrial problems, 177; begins industrial order, 190; beginning of, 197; legalism hinders, 201
- Stewardship and Prayer, 111
- Stewardship and Property, 151
- Stewardship and Service, 73
- Stewardship and the Tithe, 197
- Stewardship message, spiritual value of, 9
- Stewardship of Business emphasized, 93
- Stewardship Relation, The, 52
- Stinginess is sin, 138
- Stingy Christian, story of, 62
- Stoic prayer by Seneca, 20
- Stoicism, 17, 18
- Stories told: Chinese famine, 24; Manufacturer who thought he owned, 38; Little girl at prayer, 41; Mother prayed for son, 45; Phillips Brooks and Helen Keller, 52; of stingy Christian, 62; Thinking of the future, 64; Shipwreck, 67; Chaplain to live for Jesus, 73; Wm. E. Dodge, Steward, 75; Illinois Central Railway Conductor, 77; Mother gave son, 79; Girl carrying brother, 85; Arctic Explorers, 86; Girl wanted to be a mis-

INDEX

- sionary, 88; Chinaman and Physician, 103; Japanese secret of beauty, 106; Veteran would pray more, 111; African Missionary's prayer answered, 116; A Mother's prayer garret, 120; "A Man of God," 122; Why South America is behind North America, 131; Business man who quit, 133; Ananias and Sapphira, 139; Lady who prayed, and paid, 141; Rich farmer, 144; George Eastman, 160; A Missionary, or \$10,000? 166; Nash Clothing Company, 188; Mine cave-in, 188; Beginning of Stewardship, 197; Mother and son, 199; Hartley, Wm. B., experience, 200; Colored layman who tithed, 201; Woman who combed annually, 205; Cobbler's enlarged view, 216
- Stowe, J. J., quoted, 56
- Stowell, Hugh, poem quoted, 118
- Strong, Josiah, quoted, 191
- Success, depends on God, 22; less important than free will, 40; we are not bound to win, 52; secret of, 100; Christian, depends on individual conversions, 101
- Sursum Corda, prayer quoted, 67, 144
- Sweet, Wm. E., quoted, 76, 159, 183
- Sympathy for people, Jesus', 23; Plato's limited, 23; in Kingdom of Heaven, 24; Abraham for Sodom, 40; Moses for Israel, 42
- Talents, parable of, 55
- Taxes, are Christian, 162
- Taylor, Jeremy, quoted, 21, 165; prayer quoted, 57
- Taylor, S. Earl, quoted, 169
- Temptation, Money a, 65
- Tennyson, Alfred, poem quoted, 105, 124
- Tenth Commandment, unique, 145
- Tertullian, quoted, 154
- "Thanatopsis," quoted, 144
- "The Individualistic Gospel," quoted, 82
- "The same old baffling questions," poem, 16
- Things do not satisfy, 182
- Thirkield, Bishop W. P., prayer quoted, 99, 104, 161, 205, 209, 211
- Thrift, a Christian virtue, 157
- Thriftlessness, a sin, 159
- Time, stewardship of, 42
- Tips not acceptable to God, 79
- Tithe, a minimum, 35; an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, 52; and consciousness of God's presence, 53; in loving loyalty, 55, 62; would finance Kingdom, 197; beginning of stewardship, 198; covetousness prevents paying, 199; laws have hindered, 201; paid by Christians since time of Christ, 202; paid by patriarchs, 203; probably paid from beginning, 205; an acknowledgment, 205; Jews paid more than one, 206, 207; and tither, 209; paid in loving loyalty, 212; not an end, but acknowledgment, 215; an open door, 216
- Tithe, and Stewardship, 197
- Tither, tithe and, 209
- Tithes and offerings, 207
- Tithing in New Testament, 212; Jesus and, 214
- Toplady, A. M., poem quoted, 147
- Trench, Archbishop R. C., poem quoted, 113
- "Tristram Shandy," quoted, 204
- "Two Ways, The," quoted, 154

INDEX

- Unfinished business, sin, 180
Use of this book, 9
- Value of Stewardship, spiritual,
9
- Veteran, wished he had prayed
more, story, 111
- Vices that follow covetousness,
139
- Vineyard, parable of, 55, 58
- Vision and power, 9
- Vision, distorted, 145
- Wage earners, why? 159
- Walter, Harriet Arnold, poem
quoted, 168
- War, profits of, 136; caused by
business, 186; cannot be ended
until business and industry are
Christianized, 175; world, for
profits, 175
- Ward, Harry F., quoted, 167
- Warren, Wm. F., poem quoted,
97
- Watterson, Henry, quoted, 84
- Wattles, Willard, poem quoted, 29
- Watts, Isaac, poem quoted, 45,
209
- Wealth (See Riches)
- Wesley, John, quoted, 68, 131,
133, 161
- Westcott, Bishop B. F., prayer
quoted, 80
- "When a Man Comes to Him-
self," quoted, 159
- Whittier, John G., poem quoted,
16, 44, 46, 83, 102, 141, 142,
184, 218
- Who are covetous, 136
- "Why I Gave up Business to
Teach," story, 156
- Wilson, Stitt, quoted, 155
- Wilson, Woodrow, quoted, 159
- Winchester, Caleb T., quoted, 103
- Wolff, Leonard, quoted, 175
- Woman combed hair annually,
story, 205
- Worker, business against, 188;
business for welfare of, 174;
condition of, 178; helpfulness
motive to, 184; physical, moral,
and spiritual welfare con-
sidered, 191
- World, need of, demands steward-
ship, 59; reconstructed, 100;
prayer needed for, 113; needs
money, 123
- Works, do not save, 82
- Worship, offerings and, 203
- Xavier, Francis, quoted, 138

SCRIPTURE QUOTED

- Genesis 1. 1, 2, 26-28, p. 36: 1. 26, p. 94: 2. 8, 9, 15-17; 3. 6, 8, 9, p. 38: 4. 3-7, p. 203: 4. 6 (Septuagint), p. 204: 12. 1, 2; 18. 22-24, 32, p. 40: 14. 17-20; 15. 1, 5, p. 204
- Exodus 16. 4, 14, 15, 19-21, p. 163: 17. 8-14, p. 125: 20. 3, p. 131: 32. 30, 31, 32, p. 42
- Leviticus 27. 30-34, p. 206
- Deuteronomy 8. 11-14, 17, 18, p. 190: 12. 6, 7, p. 208: 14. 22, 23, p. 208: 14. 28, 29, p. 208: 16. 16, 17, p. 212: 26. 3, p. 208: 26. 5-10, p. 210: 30. 1-3, p. 42
- Joshua 7. 6-8, 10, 11, 20, 21, p. 145
- 1 Samuel 12. 23, p. 125
- 1 Chronicles 29. 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, p. 166
- Psalms 19. 7-9, p. 206: 139. 17-18, 23, 24, p. 39
- Proverbs 3. 5, 6, 9, 10, p. 208
- Jeremiah 6. 13-16, p. 137
- Hosea 6. 1, 3; 11. 8, 9, p. 44
- Malachi 3. 8-10, p. 211
- Matthew 3. 13-16, p. 215: 4. 1-11, p. 22: 4. 18-20, 23, p. 68: 5. 17-19, p. 213: 6. 19, p. 132 and 158: 6. 25, 26, 28-30, p. 167: 6. 30-33, p. 64: 7. 12, p. 189: 7. 21, p. 200: 9. 35-38, p. 123: 9. 38, p. 112: 10. 42, p. 81: 14. 22, 23, p. 127: 16. 24-27, p. 79: 19. 23-26, p. 148: 21. 33-41, p. 58: 23. 23, 24; 5. 40-42, p. 215: 25. 34-36, p. 169: 28. 19, 20, p. 89
- Mark 1. 35, p. 127: 9. 29, p. 112: 10. 17-22, p. 142: 16. 20, p. 107
- Luke 2. 41-49, p. 18: 3. 10-14, p. 181: 4. 16-21, p. 24: 4. 32, p. 152: 6. 36-38, p. 189: 10. 29-34, p. 60: 11. 13, p. 121: 12. 13-15, p. 138: 12. 16-21, p. 144: 12. 42-46, 48, p. 56: 14. 18-21, 24, p. 183: 14. 27-33, p. 165: 14. 33, p. 198: 15. 17-24, p. 63: 16. 9, 10, p. 157: 16. 9-12, p. 66: 16. 11, p. 66 and 168: 17. 10, p. 75: 22. 39-43, p. 27: 22. 41, p. 127
- John 1. 1-4, 10-14; 3. 16, p. 45: 4. 31-34; 15. 10, 11, p. 26: 6. 5, 8-12, p. 160: 14. 25, 26, p. 96: 15. 14-16, p. 89: 17. 1-4; 19. 28-30, p. 28: 17. 15, 19, p. 157: 18. 33-37, p. 20
- Acts 1. 4-8, p. 47: 1. 7-8; 2. 1-4, p. 101: 2. 14-18, 21, p. 98: 2. 32-36; 4. 13; 13. 52, p. 105: 2. 36-39, p. 102: 2. 44-47, p. 104: 3. 12, 13, p. 107: 4. 23-31, p. 119: 5. 1-5, p. 140: 6. 1-4, p. 115: 8. 14-17, p. 121: 8. 29; 11. 12; 13. 2; 16. 7, p. 107: 11. 15-17, p. 97: 20. 28, 31, 33-35, p. 77: 27. 22-25, p. 87
- Romans 1. 29, 30, p. 135: 3. 20, p. 75: 8. 1-4; 13. 7-9, p. 217: 14. 7, p. 36
- 1 Corinthians 4. 1-2, 4, 5, 7, p. 81: 6. 19, 20, p. 83: 9. 16-17, p. 87: 16. 1-3, p. 212
- 2 Corinthians 5. 14, 15, 17, p. 83: 5. 18-21, p. 85
- Ephesians 4. 28-32, p. 185: 5. 5, p. 134: 6. 18, p. 126

SCRIPTURE QUOTED

Philippians 2. 1-4, p. 186

Colossians 3. 5, p. 134

1 Thessalonians 4. 9-12, p. 192

2 Thessalonians 3. 6, 10, p. 192

1 Timothy 2. 1, p. 126: 6. 9-12,
p. 158: 6. 17, p. 211

Titus 1. 7, p. 168

Hebrews 12. 3, p. 35: 13. 20, p. 219

James 5. 1, 3, p. 169

1 John 3. 17, p. 59 and 154

Revelation 5. 8; 7. 9; 8. 1, 3, 4,
5, p. 116

POEMS QUOTED

- "A cricket's chirrup," Ralph S. Cushman, 81
 "Across the fields of yesterday," Thomas S. Jones, Jr., 161
 "A fire mist and a planet," William Herbert Carruth, 37
 "A man must live," Charlotte Perkins Stetson, 65
 "And as the path of duty is made plain," John Greenleaf Whittier, 218
 "At length when the war's at an end," Eric Dawson, 80
 "Blessings on thee, little man," John Greenleaf Whittier, 142
 "Build thee more stately mansions," Oliver Wendell Holmes, 57
 "Challenge thy people," Jessie Brown Pounds, 101
 "Come, Holy Ghost, in love," Robert II King of France, tr. by Ray Palmer, 47
 "Does the road wind up-hill all the way?" Christina Rossetti, 28
 "For the youth they gave," Theodosia Garrison, 59
 "From the lust for gain or greed for gold," Ralph S. Cushman, 66
 "God is not far," Ralph S. Cushman, 108
 "God spare thee not, America," Theresa Virginia Beard, 74
 "He saw me plunged in deep distress," Samuel Stennett, 34
 "High thoughts, and noble in all lands," Richard Burton, 104
 "Holy Spirit, all divine," Andrew Reed, 94
 "I am a Child in the Darkness," Marianne Farningham, 63
 "I bow my forehead to the dust," John Greenleaf Whittier, 102
 "I cannot think or reason," Willard Wattles, 29
 "I did not know till 'neath the rod," Susie M. Best, 137
 "If I can stop one heart from breaking," Emily Dickinson, 163
 "If I covet one high grace," Anna Burnham Bryant, 106
 "If I have been less true, less strong," Lena Blinn Lewis, 48
 "If we have whispered truth," John Greenleaf Whittier, 83
 "I go to prove my soul," Robert Browning, 17
 "I have a rendezvous with Death," Alan Seeger, 165
 "I know, Lord, thou hast sent him," Cale Young Rice, 19
 "I like the man who faces what he must," Sarah Knowles Bolton, 23
 "Ill fares the land," Oliver Goldsmith, 131
 "I looked upon a sea," 135
 "Immortal love, forever full," John Greenleaf Whittier, 46
 "In all the little things of life," Horatio Bonar, 214
 "In Flanders Fields," John McCrea, 58
 "In men whom men condemn as ill," Joaquin Miller, 159
 "Into the woods my Master went," Sidney Lanier, 27
 "Into this Universe, and Why not knowing," Omar Khāyyām, 96

POEMS QUOTED

- "In vain we call our notions fudge," James Russell Lowell, 146
 "I saw the spires of Oxford," Miss W. M. Letts, 164
 "Is thy cruse of comfort wasting?" Elizabeth Charles, 189
 "I thank thee just for life," Ralph S. Cushman, 181
 "It is not the deed we do," Harriet McEwen Kimball, 169
 "I wanted the gold, and I sought it," Robert Service, 182
 "I worked for men," Robert Davis, 25
 "I worship thee, O Holy Ghost," William F. Warren, 97
 "I would be true, for there are those who trust me," Harriet Arnold
 Walter, 168
 "Just as I am, without one plea," Charlotte Elliott, 76
 "Let thy high manhood sacred be," Henry S. Kent, 185
 "Life is a sheet of paper white," James Russell Lowell, 157
 "Lo! amid the press," Susan Coolidge, 127
 "Lord, speak to me that I may speak," Frances Ridley Havergal, 122
 "Lord, what a change within us one short hour," Archbishop R. C.
 Trench, 113
 "Love's on the highroad," Dana Burnet, 187
 "Man's life is but a working day," Christina G. Rossetti, 207
 "More than half beaten, but fearless," Unknown, 126
 "More things are wrought by prayer," Alfred Tennyson, 124
 "My Country, 'tis of Thee," Samuel Francis Smith, 79
 "My shoulders ache beneath my pack," Joyce Kilmer, 82
 "Nothing in my hand I bring," Augustus M. Toplady, 147
 "Nothing to do in this world of oufs," 41
 "Not that they starve, but starve so dreamlessly," Vachel Lindsay, 177
 "No, when the fight begins within himself," Robert Browning, 94
 "Of all the colors I love to see," Ralph S. Cushman, 120
 "Oh, the little more, and how much it is," Robert Browning, 153
 "O Joy supreme! I know the Voice," John Greenleaf Whittier, 44
 "O Joy that seekest me," George Matheson, 26
 "O life, thou art rich," Ralph S. Cushman, 68
 "O Love that wilt not let me go," George Matheson, 41
 "O masters, lords, and rulers in all lands," Edwin Markham, 192
 "O pale faced theologian," Elliott E. Mills, 93
 "O strange and wild is the world of men," Mary E. Albright, 21
 "Out of the shame of my coward heart," Ralph S. Cushman, 87
 "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire," James Montgomery, 111
 "Rest is not quitting," John Sullivan Dwight, 78
 Rubaiyat, Omar Kháyyám, 16
 "So live, that when thy summons comes," William Cullen Bryant, 144
 "So many gods, so many creeds," 84
 "Speak to him, thou, for he hears," Alfred Tennyson, 105
 "Still sits the schoolhouse by the road," John Greenleaf Whittier, 184
 "Stir me, Oh! Stir me, Lord, I care not how," Unknown, 118
 "Thanks to Saint Matthew, who had been," Sarah G. Cleghorn, 186

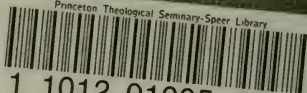
POEMS QUOTED

- "The Captain of My Soul," W. E. Henley, 17
"The night has a thousand eyes," Francis William Bourdillon, 148
"There are hermit souls," Sam Walter Foss, 36
"There is a destiny that makes us brothers," Edwin Markham, 189
"There is a place where Jesus sheds," Hugh Stowell, 118
"The roses red upon my neighbor's vine," Abraham Gruber, 216
"There's a wideness in God's mercy," Frederick W. Faber, 43
"The same old baffling question!" John Greenleaf Whittier, 16
"They may not need me," Unknown, 61
"Thy love shall chant its own beatitudes," Elizabeth Barrett Browning, 26
"Tired! Well what of that?" 86
"To live as gently as I can," Edgar A. Guest, 139
"To love someone more dearly every day," Maude Louise Ray, 183
"To stretch my hand and touch him," Samuel W. Duffield, 115
"Truth be more precious to me than the eyes," Max Eastman, 205
"Vice is a monster of such hideous mien," Alexander Pope, 211
"Wealth is a means," John Greenleaf Whittier, 141
"Were the whole realm of nature mine," Isaac Watts, 45
"What care I for robe or stole?" Robert Loveman, 89
"What matters death if freedom be not dead," Joyce Kilmer, 83
"When I survey the wondrous cross," Isaac Watts, 34 and 209
"Whether we climb, whether we plod," Lizette Woodworth Reese, 39
"While kings of eternal evil," Louise Imogen Guiney, 99
"Who does God's work will get God's pay," Dennis McCarthy, 191
"Work! Thank God for the might of it," Angela Morgan, 193
"Yet, Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!" Omar Khāyyām,
16
"You asked me how I gave my heart to Christ," Unknown, 85

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